A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Shewing,
1. The Motives
2. The Meanes
3. The Markes
4. The Kindes

} thereof.

Delivered in five Sermons, by IOHN PRESTON, Doctor in Divinity, Chaplane in Ordinary to his Majestie; Master of *Emanuel Colledge* in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher at *Lincolnes Inne*.

MATTH. 22. 37, 38.

This is the first, and great Commandement: thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.

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A briefe Collection of the principall heads of these five insuing Sermons.

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To the Reader of these pious and plaine Sermons, Grace and PEACE.

CHristian Reader, it was an old complaint of an Heathen, that the noise of the old Philosophers opinions did hinder their dung-hill gods from hearing their prayers: And it is no very new complaint of a Christian, that the many idle subtleties of the Schoole have so drawn up Divinity to the highest pegge of a curious mind, that it hinders the heart from moulding it into Prayers and practice.

This grave and serious Divine, whose living Sermons are here commended to thee when hee is dead, saw it with both eyes. Therefore though he was no small master in subtleties, yet all his thoughts were bent to draw them downe from the floating braine, to the feeling

heart; that his hearers might be better brought to know and doe. As this hath been his course in all his writings before extant; so is it in this, that now comes to thy hands. How might he have hid himselfe in the thornes of speculation? How high might hee have flowne in the curious extracts of every word of this Text? But he, that delighted to speake ten words to edification, rather then ten thousand that could not pierce a very ordinary braine, contented himselfe to fill up deepe foards to make them passable, and to wade the sweete and shallow streames of the love of the Lord Iesus.

He might, from hence, have set himselfe upon the mount of cursings, and showred downe worse then fire and brimstone upon delinquents: but the meeknesse of his spirit carries him up to the mount of blessings, to learne good scoles through death to finde life, through threatnings to meete with comforts.

Hee, being lifted up by the Divine love of Christ, doth describe love, and our love to Christ: He soares to the equity, and necessity of it. He rests not before he have given you the meanes, motives, markes, gaines, qualifications, and obiects of this love. How faine would

would he have thee love the Lord Iesus, that thou maiest avoid the curse, and enioy the blessing! Hee knew nothing more necessary for a good Christian then this love: First, he must be a Christian by faith; next, hee must live a Christian by faith and love too: Hee can doe neither without the love of Christ to him; and this hee can not have but in his time: hee shall have faith in Christ, and love to the Lord Iesus.

There is neither thing, nor love in all the world more comfortable to a good man then this: Sinne presseth hard downe, and pulls him back from heaven; Satan baites both the hands, and hookes of the world, prosperity, and adversity, to entangle him; Death brings him downe to the bed of darkenesse, the land of oblivion, and laies him up as a despised lumpe: But if hee have this love, when all vanishing bubbles flie away; this mounts him up into the bosome of God. As water, be it conveyed in Pipes never so low, yet in the same Pipes it will rise up as high as the Spring head: so this love springing from the bosome of God, though it bee shed abroad, and runne through the channels of our hearts on earth, yet with a

willing motion it mounts up to Christ againe, and carrieth us along with it in despite of stormes. Where we love, we live: where wee love, we desire to be; and God hath so ordered, that this apperite shall not be in vaine.

And as for other Loves, see whether the Love of the Lord Iesus doe not surpasse them all. Love other things, and yet often they slide away from thee, so that in them thou hast but a momentany joy: But love thy Lord, and, doing so, he abides with thee for ever, and is to thee a spring of everlasting joy. Love other things, and they cannot know the sincerity of thy heart, how much, and in what manner and measure thou lovest them: But love thy Lord, and hee knowes better the love of thy heart then thy selfe: Thou maist say unto him, as did Peter, Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee; and shalt find intertainment answerable. Love other things, and thou hast vexing care over them, both about their gaining, keeping, and losing: But love thy Lord, and thy care is sweete for him; yea, he careth for thee in all thy wayes. Thou canst lose nothing by it, no not thy heart, which though it goe out to him, and he keepes it,

yet he gives it to thee againe, and that better then it was, to comfort thee in thy whole course.

Love other things, and thou findest not them at all times, nor so often as thou wouldest: when thou hast need thou canst not speake to them so often as thou wouldst, neither doe they harken to thy words as thou couldst wish: But love thy Lord, and he is with thee alwaies to the end of the world: Thou maiest speake to him at any time, by night, or by day; he heareth thee at all times, and gives thee thy hearts desires. Love other things, and thou canst not know their secrets; there may bee something in them which may bee vexations unto thee in the issue; there may lye a snake under the greene grasse, a filthy toade under a sweet flower, and a worme in the heart of a desired apple. But love thy Lord, and he will reveale the mystery of Godlinesse, and his hidden secrets of truth unto thee according to his word; yea, thou shalt see that nothing but that which is glorious in it self, and good for thee, is either in him, or about him.

Love other things, and they put thee to many a trouble; they hinder thee in thy prayers, and

all thy ſervice to God, becauſe thou doſt alwaies think and dote upon them: But love thy Lord, *and hee bringeth into thy heart and conſcience,* peace which paſſeth all underſtanding. *The more thou loveſt him when thou prayeſt, the more hee giveſ thee to thy ſelfe; yea, the more he gives thee to himſelfe, and fills thee with holy comfort. Love other things, and they are without thee ſtill; thou canſt never bring them to any more intimate communion; ſave that which is common to thee with Epicures: But love thy* Lord, *and he* dwelleth in thee, and thou in him, *for* he is Love.

Love other things, and they ſeeke at thy hands a profit and gaine to themſelves, or elſe they periſh in thy love. They will take advantage upon thy love to worke upon thee for their owne perfections: But love thy Lord, *and hee ſeekes thy profit and perfection: he alwaies endures to glorifie himſelfe in doing thee good. Love other things, and moſt times they will deceive thee, they are often lyars, variable, and inconſtant: But love thy* Lord, *and thou ſhalt be aſſured: hee is moſt true, and unchangeable, and thou maiſt build upon him, that* hee will not faile thee nor forſake thee.

Love

love other things, and oftimes they cause griefe and heavineſſe, and ſo the highly diſpleaſe thee. But love thy Lord, and it ſhall ſtrike feare and ſad confuſion of face, becauſe thou canſt ſee nothing in him that can diſpleaſe thee. Laſtly, love other things, and thou knoweſt not aſſuredly whether thou ſhalt love them again: But love thy Lord, and thou maiſt bee aſſured that he anſwereth thee with the ſame; yea, with [illegible] for hee cannot but love a bleſſed child of the begetting of his owne will.

By how much more excellent this love is then the love of all things elſe, by ſo much the more muſt thou preſſe to enjoy and practice it. Every thing naturally deſires that which is beſt for it. If it have it not, it is from the errour about the obiect, or the miſcariage of the appetite. That therefore thou maieſt faile in neither, but mayeſt have the beſt obiect, and the beſt appetite cleared from clouds of ignorance and ſin unto thee, theſe five Sermons of an experienced maſter in Iſrael are tendred unto thee. If thou reapeſt benefit by them, give glory to God, who would not have this lampe of love kept under a buſhel, and buried in oblivion.

If

If thou receivest the least encouragement, from these foregoing lines, to make use of this light; know that they proceede from the love of thee in Christ, *in him, who desires thy prayers, that thee may love the* Lord Jesus *both in life and death.*

Farewell.

SERMON

A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF DIVINE LOVE.

Sermon I.

1 Cor. 16. 22.

If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him bee Anathema, Maranatha, Let him bee had in execration, or let him be excommunicated unto the death.

THese words have little dependance on the words before going; which are these, *The salutation of me* Paul *with my owne hands.* It was the custome of the Apostle, that the Church might not deceived with counterfeit Epistles to set his name to those hee wrote: And that he would not doe alone, but did alwayes adde some gracious sentence, as commonly this, *The grace of our Lord Iesus Christ be with you all.* And there he addes that sentence, which so suits with the spirit and mind of S. *Paul*, that it might easily shew it to be S. *Pauls* Epistle; a man so abounding in the love of the Lord, as hee is zealous against such as love him not. We shall finde, in

al S. *Pauls* preaching, that faith and love, were that which he drave at, those two roots, those two pillars on which the Church is built, from whence all the rest flow: Hereby teaching Ministers what they should beat at, what should bee their aime: And so people are taught hence what to doe: they must water these two roots well, and then the branches will flourish. Our wisedome should bee to looke to these, for these being strong, all will be strong: If these bee weake, all will be weake *If any man love not the Lord Iesus, let him bee had in execration; yea, accursed unto the death.* His scope is to commend love to the *Corinthians.* If I should cast about me to commend some speciall thing unto you now at the closing up of my Epistle, I know nothing better then this *Love of the Lord Iesus.* And there are two reasons why you should love him, first ye were in a miserable and accursed condition if you doe it not. And the second is from the object you are to love, he is *the Lord* and so may well challenge your love; *Iesus your Saviour*, and so hath well deserved it: so that we have here an exhortation, and two reasons of it. The words have little difficulty. Somewhat I will say of the two words in the originall *Anathema* & *Maranatha.* The word *Anathema* signifies the separatio of a thing unto destruction. *Maranatha* is a Syrian word, signifying cursing, take from the Hebrew root, and signifies more then *Anathema.* The Apostle doubles this curse to shew the greatnes of the punishment It is a great punishment which he would expresse in two languages. The generall doctrine we will observe

serve from these words, is this, *That to love the Lord Iesus is so necessarily required of us, that hee is worthy to be cursed that doth it not.* Sometimes in Scripture the promise is made to faith, sometimes to repentance, sometimes to love. Love is so required, that without it, a man is worthy to be accursed; yea, and shall be cursed. I will but open and apply this; not standing to prove it. And First, I will shew what love is in generall: Secondly, what this love of the Lord Iesus is; to shew which there will bee showne how it is wrought: And thirdly, how they come to bee worthy to be accursed, that love him not. And first for the first. Love is among the affections, which are planted in the Will; and it may be described thus, *It is a disposition of the Will and Heart of man, whereby it turnes and inclines to some good, which it apprehends to bee agreeable to its owne nature.* The Will is carried to nothing, but that which is apprehended to bee good. Now this love is a principall act of the Will: and it must bee an agreeable good to him, whose Will inclines unto it; for an envyous man may confesse the excellencies of another man, but hee hates them; he suffers by them; they seeme not to be an agreeable good to him. And this may bee illustrated by the contrary. Hate is that whereby a man turnes from a thing which he apprehends contrary to himselfe. This Love shews it selfe in two effects: first, it desires the preservation of what it loves, that it may be kept safe: secondly, it desires Union with it, that they may draw neerer one to another. That you love, which you

Doctrine. 1

What love is in generall.

How love shews it selfe.

you desire may bee yours, with which you desire conjunction: Now sometimes a thing may bee neerer, sometimes too far off; therefore it desires such a neerenesse as may stand with its convenience. And this is common to all love; if you love a Glasse, you will take care that it bee kept cleane, and whole, and for your use: so, if you love a Horse, you will take care that he bee well, and in good ease, and that he be yours. The same we see in the love of a Father to his Sonne, of one friend to another. This is the nature of Love. Now Hate contrariwise, desires the destruction of that which is hated, that it may bee taken out of the world; and if that cannot bee, it desires separation from it, as far as may bee. And thus you have seene the nature of Love in generall. Now there are divers kindes of Love: There is *a Love of Pitty*, whē you desire the preservation of a mans person, and the removing of some ill quality; As, our Saviour mourned in Spirit, for the hardnesse of their hearts; hee did pitty them, and yet was angry with their sinne.

The kindes of Love.

3 There is *a Love of Desire*, when a thing is desired to bee kept safe for our use: And this is for the inferiour faculties, as the sigh loves a pleasant object should be continued.

4 There is *a Love of Complacence*, when wee looke on a thing, in which all the faculties are pleased; not onely the inferiour, but the superiour, as the Minde and the Will.

There is *a Love of friendship*, when a man loves where he is loved again, when love is reciprocall; there is an intercourse of Love.

There

There is a *Love of dependance*, when wee love him on whom we depend; and thus we love God, when wee looke upon him, as on whom all our good depends: so that we love him more than our selvs, because our good depends upon him, more than on our selves.

Wee will adde the qualities of Love; there is a *naturall Love*, planted in us by nature: as the of parents to their children, of one man to another: this love is indifferent, not good in it selfe; good no otherwise, than directed on a good object. 1 The qualities of Love.

There is a *sinfull Love*, arising from sinfull habits, which seeke things convenient to it: As nothing is better than love on a right object, so nothing worse than love on a wrong object. As naturall Love puts us in the condition men: so this sinfull Love makes men worse than beasts, and equals them with the Divell. 2

There is a *spirituall Love*, arising out of holy qualities, which seekes an object agreeable to it. And this makes a man above a man, and in some sort equall with the Angels. Men are as they love. GOD judges us by our affections, wee are judged by what we love. He that loves wickednesse, is truly a wicked man; he that loves holinesse, is truely holy. This foundation that wee have laid, though it may seeme somewhat remote, yet ye shall find it of use to hold up this building, before wee have done with the point. 3

The second thing that wee have to declare, is, What this love of the Lord Iesus is. Now the best way to shew what this is, is to shew how it 2 What this love of the Lord Iesus is.

is wrought; now for the working of it, there must be two Antecedent things which must make way for it; and they are *Humiliation* and *Faith*: for every one beleeves not this to bee needfull; and if they doe beleeve it, yet they may bee opposite to it, because it is not agreeable to their nature, That a man must be broken so, and moulded again, before hee can have this love which is wrought by Humiliation and Faith. And they are wrought on this manner, when we preach the Gospell, and offer *Iesus Christ* unto you: for the duty of a Minister, is nothing but this, *to offer Iesus Christ* himselfe unto the world. *To us a Child is borne; To us a Sonne is given*: for, *unto you is borne a Saviour, that is, Christ the Lord.* This is the summe of the Gospell; this is the newes which we bring: God hath given us his Sonne; wee offer you not forgivenesse of sinne, but the Lord Iesus. And when he hath *given us him, will he not with him give us all things else?* Christ must first be given, and when you have him, you shall have all: in him are *the promises, yea and Amen.* First have Christ, and then the promises belong unto you, not before. The Gospell is nothing but this; we are to manifest, that God the Father is willing to give you his Sonne. We are his Spokesmen, *to beseech you* to take him, that you would take him as your husband, to be ruled by him: none, before you are humbled, can marry you to Christ. You must bee divorced from all other things, and beleeve that Christ will take you; and this is Faith, the other Humiliation. And then when you can receive him, you will love him. Now when we

Isa. 9. Luke 2.

Iohn 3.16.

Rom. 8.

2 Cor. 1. 20.

2 Cor. 5.

preach

preach thus unto the world, what answere doe wee finde? Why, there are some that will not beleeve that there is such a Lord: and then our worke is to perswade, that Christ is such a Lord; and this was the Apostles worke, and theirs at the beginning. But when wee intreat you to take Christ for your Lord, your answer is, as theirs who were invited to the feast. This, and this excuse they have to hinder them, to beleeve, that a Christ is propounded, and men regard him not, they will not looke after him. Now, that Christ may be received, there is required Humiliation and Faith: Humiliation opens their eyes, by the Law, and spirit of bondage, that they see themselves miserable men, men condemned to dye. Now when God hath discovered our misery unto us, and wee rightly apprehend what our estates are, then we beginne to looke on Christ as a condemned malefactour on his pardon; as a Captaine on him that comes to redeeme him; as a Widdow that thought she should live well enough alone, but now when all her goods as seized upon, and they are now to carry her to prison, would bee content if any one would marry her. When a man shall see what hee is without Christ, one that is condemned, that must perish if hee have him not; then he lookes on Christ, as upon one most desirable, to prize him, to thirst for him; and if hee know that Christ will then receive him, oh then he cannot but love him; for Love (as hath beene said) is to a good apprehended, fit for us. Now without this, wee will think of Christ, as if wee might bee well enough without him: But

when

when the heart is thus prepared by Humiliatiō, oh that all the World would vanish for Christ! Then comes the Gospel, and tels us that Christ is willing to take us, to redeeme us, to be ours. And then when we take him, the match is made up: and thence ariſes this *conjugall Love*. The Apoſtle praies for the Epheſians, that *Chriſt may dwell in their hearts by Faith*, Ephes. 3. to unite them to Christ, to marry him; then presently it followes, *That ye may bee rooted and grounded in Love*: so that Love followes this, and not a flaſh, but it rootes us in Love. The act of juſtifying Faith, is the taking of Christ for rest. Now when yee have taken him thus, then you will love him, and then all that followes will be effects of this love: so that this love of the Lord Ieſus, is this; to wit,

A holy diſpoſition, ariſing from Faith, whereby wee cleave unto the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, with full purpoſe of heart, to ſerve and pleaſe him in all things.

Whereby wee cleave to him. Love inclines, and knits our hearts to him, as it did *Davids* to *Jonathans*. And ſo *Barnabas* exhorted them to *cleave unto the Lord with full purpoſe of heart, Act.* Neither is this idle, but makes a man deſirous to pleaſe the Lord in all things. A man is ſaide to love the Lord, when out of a perſwaſion that Christ is moſt deſirable, and willing to receive him, hee cleaves to the Lord with a deſire to ſerve and pleaſe him in all things. Faith

that

that begets Love, is not onely a perſwaſion that the Lord will be merciſull, and forgive us: (For a priſoner may ſee the Iudge willing to pardon him, and perſwade himſelfe that hee ſhall be pardoned, and yet love not the Iudge, becauſe hee lookes not on the Iudge, as on an amiable perſon,) but a receiving and reſting upon his amiableneſſe. There is another affection; when the heart is ſo framed, it apprehends Chriſt for its onely good, its happineſſe. Faith is not onely an act of the minde, to beleeve that God will pardon us; but of the Will and heart alſo, to take Chriſt for our Husband; ſo that all the parts of the heart are inclined and bent after him. *If you beleeve with all your heart*, ſaith *Philip* to the Eunuch, *Act.* 8. If a Spouſe ſhould ſee one willing to have her, that is not enough to make up the match; ſhe may not thinke him fit, ſhee may bee unwilling. But ſuppoſe there bee one that ſhee loves above all, whom ſhe thinkes to bee moſt fit for her, yea ſhe thinkes ſhe ſhall bee undone if ſhe have him not: but yet ſhe is not ſure that hee will have her, but thinkes it is very probable that hee may be induced unto it. So this is Faith, when a man ſees Chriſt onely worth his love, he would gladly bee divorced from all, ſo that he might have Chriſt, oh he cannot bee without him, yet there is ſomewhat betwixt them, he cannot firmly beleeve that Chriſt loves him, but yet doth not thinke that hee is wholly averſe from him. Though thy perſwaſion bee not full, yet if you have this thirſt and deſire, this hungering after

ter Christ, you may bee comforted. This shuts out such as have a perswasion of the pardon of their sinnes, and yet have not this love, this prizing, this desiring after Christ; and takes in such as doe thus love and prize him, yet finde not that full perswasion of his love; so that this love is that which follows Humiliation and Faith, the breaking of the heart, and the moulding of it up againe: when wee see our need of him, and his willingnesse to receive us, then wee will take him, which cannot bee without this love to him.

3 Why they are worthy to be cursed that love not the Lord Iesus.

Now wee come to the third thing, the reasons why they are worthy to bee accursed unto the death that Love not the Lord Iesus. This may seeme strange and harsh. What then becomes of all unregenerated men? The Apostle meanes, sure, such as continue in their not loving the Lord, or such as have sinned against the holy Ghost. But the former sence I take to bee the best, neither is this any strange thing: for it is one part of the Gospel. There are two parts of the Gospel, *If you beleeve, you shalbe saved; if you beleeve not, you shalbe damned.* Sometimes it is if you repent you shalbe saved; or if you doe not you shall perish, so if you love you shalbe saved; if you love not, you shalbe accursed: now why should hee pitch on such a frame of words to expresse their condition?

Marke 16.

1 *Reason.* Because when Christ shall come and bee a suter to us, when hee shall woe us, and offer himselfe to us, and wee will have none of him, then

the

the Sonne waxes angry. When he shall offer himselfe unto us, and none will kisse him, then hee waxes angry unto the death, and they perish in the way. The greatest love not answered, turnes to the greatest hatred: so when the Father sent to call them to the feast that were invited, and they refused it, this made him wrath; when wee shall come to preach Christ to men, when this light hid from the beginning of the world shall shine, and you shall despise it and contemne it, know that now is the axe laid to the roote of the tree. God will beare it at your hands no longer. Now if a man will not Love the Lord Iesus, let him be had in execration, yea let him bee accursed unto the death. Pſal. 2. Mat. 22.

If a man did not keepe the Law, he was to be cursed, now there was a double keeping of the Law: A *Legall*, which answeres the exact rigour of the Law; an *Evangelicall*, which is an earnest endeavouring to keepe the Law, and to make a mans heart as perfect as may be. Now there being more mercy in this, there is a greater curse on the breach of it. Now Love is the fulfilling of the Law; and not to love the Lord, is, not to keepe the Law, and therefore the Curse follows it. 2

If a man love not the Lord Iesus, it is because he loves something better than him. It may be you love your Wealth more than Christ: And are you not worthy to be cursed for it? It may be you are lovers of pleasure more than of God, and doth not this deserve a Curse? It may bee you 3

ove the praise of men, before that of God; and is not this to bee accursed? Adultery was punished with death; and what punishment then is enough for the going a whoring from such a God, after such vanties?

Againe, Cursing belongs to Hypocrites; *Woe be unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites*, Matthew 23. Now, what a man doth not out of love, is done out of hypocrisie; which is, to doe the outward action without the inward affection: as counterfeit gold hath the same stamp and colour with true gold. But as wee cast away counterfeit silver and gold, set it apart to destruction, nayling them up, that they may bee knowne; so will God deale with such as serve him outwardly, without this love to him.

5 Love is that which commands all in a man. It is as the rudder to a shippe; all followes love. When a man love not the Lord, all goes from him. Now when the whole man shall go from the Lord, is not such a one worthy to bee cursed, yea to bee had in execration to the death?

Vse 1. It is a great sin, not to love the Lord Iesus.

If this love of the Lord be so necessary, then see what a sinne it is, what an execrable thing it is, not to love the Lord; and what you are to thinke of your selves, if you love not the Lord. When Iesus Christ shall bee propounded unto men, and this light is great, but men doe resist it, and not embrace the Lord: when we see this, we should have such a spirit as *Paul*, (for this was out of the abundance of his zeale) wee should,

I say, *bee stirred* against such with an holy indignation, *Act.* 17. *Doe not I hate those that hate thee?* Psal. 139. yea I hate them with a perfect hate. *This thou hast, that thou hatest the workes of the Nicholaitans, which thing also I hate,* Revelations 2. And this was a signe of *Lots* sincerity, that his righteous soule was grieved, and *vexed with the uncleane conversation of the Sodomites,* 2 Peter 2. If you can see Christ scorned and rejected, and his Word slighted, and *his blood trampled on*, and you your selves are not moved with it, you are not of *Pauls* spirit, who speaking of some, *whose God was their belly, whose glory was their shame, of whom* (saith hee) *I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the crosse of Christ,* Philip. 3. Whence came this, but out of the abundance of his love to Christ, and mankinde? I wish yee would all looke to your selves, whether you are in this number or not, of those that love not the Lord. This is such a sinne, as the curse is doubled upon it: And the punishment is but to shew the measure of the sinne. Hee thunders not out his curse against him that opposeth the Lord, or resisteth him, but against him that loveth not the Lord. The Apostle, as *Moses*, gets him up to the *Mount Ebal*; and whom doth he curse? Even all such as love not the Lord Iesus. This Doctrine throughly considered, may let in a crevice of light to thee, that now thou maist looke on thy selfe, as on an execrable thing which God hates; and thou maist see GOD, even stretching out his pow-

er to confound thee, yea thou maist see the Gospel cursing thee.

Ob. But what terrour is there in the preaching of the Gospel, you will say?

Sol. O much more (my Brethren) than may bee expressed; for the curse of the Law was not so peremptory; though we have plaine words for it, yet it was not without all condition. But God sweares to this curse, as if wee were thus cursed if wee would continue not to love him. The Law is the proper instrument of humbling, yet the Gospel humbles more; for sinne is the matter of Humiliation. And there bee sinnes against the Gospel, yea greater sinnes than against the Law: when thou heatest the curse of the Law, *Cursed be he that continueth not in every thing that is written in the booke of the Law, to doe them*, Galathians 3. You will say, you wil go to Christ, & he shall do it for you: But when the Gospel curses such as love not Christ, to whom will you goe to love God? Another man cannot love for you. And if you thinke this be too harsh, let this verse sound oft in your eares.

If any man love not the Lord Iesus Christ, let him be accursed unto the death.

This cannot bee altered, it is the Word of God; aske then thy selfe this question, whether thou lovest the Lord, or no? And put not your selfe off with your Hope, but try your Love; for Love will have sensible strings in the heart; it

will drive you close to the Lord, to keepe in with him, to have communion with him.

Doſt thou then feele, that thou art never well, but when thou art with him, and yet doſt thou not love him? Doſt thou walke with God, as *Enoch* did? Will any of you ſay, that a Wife loves her Husband, which with her good will, will never be with him? Signes of Love 1

Love is alſo very dilligent and laborious, you will never leave, till you get neere him whom you love; no labour will be tedious, to get his favour; many yeeres ſeeme a few daies to *Iacob*, to ſerve for *Rachel*, becauſe he loved her. 2

Againe, Love is not of a deferring nature, but is impatient of all delayes. 3

Againe, Love is content with it ſelfe; it doth not need to be hired to love, *Amor eſt ſibi ipſi dulce pabulum*: it carries its meate in its owne mouth. If you love the Lord Ieſus, you would not aske what wages you ſhould have to love him. 4

Againe, Love is a ſtrong impulſive qaulity, it carries you on impetuouſly unto the Lord, it is a fire that breakes through thicke and thinne: ſo that he that loves, cannot ſinne wilfully, if hee would; hee cannot but obey, hee cannot doe any thing againſt the Goſpel, he muſt doe all things for it. *The Love of Chriſt conſtraines me*, ſaith S. *Paul*, 2 *Corinthians* 5. Looke how a man is carried with a ſtrong ſtreame, or by a ſtrong man whom hee cannot reſiſt; ſo his love compelled him; I preach, and preach, and men thinke mee 5

mad,

mad, but I cannot but doe it: the love of Christ constraines me, and as it constraines me, so there is nothing more different than constraint, and not to doe it. The effects of this Love are so violent, as if they were compelled; but for the manner of working, nothing is so contrary to it as compulsion; for you love him, and are carried to it, as a stone to the center, you would doe no otherwise.

So endeth the first Sermon.

A

A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sermon II.

BY

IOHN PRESTON, DD.

Matt. 22. 37, 38.

This is the first, and great Commandement: thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.

Psal. 31. 23.

Love the Lord O all ye his Saints.

LONDON,
Printed by *Thomas Paine*, for *John Staf-ford* 1640.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sermon II.

1 Cor. 16. 22.

If any man love not the Lord Iesus Christ, let him be had in execration, yea let him be anaunsedunto the death.

THat love to the Lord Iesus is so necessarily required, that he is worthy to be accursed that hath it not.

Point.

Then hence you are to consider your condition, and to examine your selfe. it may be this is thy condition, and it may be a thing you never considered of, or at least you never knew the danger of it. Therefore now see what your case is. The best service wee can doe to you, is to shew you your estates, if yee bee

Vse 2. Try whether, what you do is out of love.

right, to comfort you; and if ye be not right, is it not best for ye to know, while it may be amended? Thou that livest in the Church, and hast gone farre, examine thy selfe in this. Hast thou done all out of Love? Thou hast kept thy selfe in good courte: thou keepest the Lords day, and livest like a Christian; thou doest many things indeed. But let mee aske thee this question, Doe you all out of love? for without love all is naught. If a man should bee a Martyr, (which is the highest action,) yet without this love, it were to no purpose, 1 *Corinthians* 13. Put the case a man should doe many things for thee, yet if hee doe it not out of love to thee, you cannot regard it; *Neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision availes any thing, but faith which workes by love*, Galathians 5. It is all one, whether you pray or not; heare or not; live well or not, if it bee not out of love. What was said of circumcision or uncircumcision, may bee said of any duty; all that you have done, is as nothing, if it bee not out of love: try your selves by this, for I know not in all the frames of Theology, such a touchstone of Hypocrisie, as this. This most unmaskes a man of any thing. As it was with the Apostle, *The Law revived, and he died*, Romans 7. So, it may be, you have thought your selfe a living man; see then if you love, deceive not your selfe any longer.

This is a Doctrine of much moment; if GOD would conveigh it with Majestie, by the power of his Spirit, it would amaze and startle the stoutest

teſt ſtomacke to heare, *Curſed is he, that loves not the Lord.* If you love the Lord, hee will beare much with you: ſee what a teſtimony hee gives of *David*, for all his failing. But doe what you will for him, without love, and hee will regard it but as a Complement. As men count that a Complement not to be regarded, with which the heart go's not, ſo doth God: looke therefore, that you love the Lord Ieſus, for it is a thing of great conſequence, the curſe follows you, if you doe it not.

You are now therefore to examine your ſelfe, Whether you love or no? And to helpe you in it, I will lay downe ſome markes of this love; but firſt ſet downe with your ſelfe this concluſion, *If I love not the Lord Ieſus, I am an accurſed man.*

Notes of triall of this love of the Lord Chriſt.

1

Doe you feele this love in you? have you a ſenſe of it? *Ammon* was ſicke of love, ſo that his friends could ſee him weare away: ſo the Spouſe, *I am ſicke of love*, Canticles 2. And doſt thou love the Lord, and canſt not feele it? Doſt thou feele thy heart working towards God? This love is a thing that one would thinke needs no markes, you cannot but ſee it. It is noted in Love, ſo, that if you did love the Lord, you would have a longing deſire after him; there will be joy in the fruition of him, anger againſt all impediments to it, griefe when he withdrawes himſelfe, hope when there it any probability of enjoying him, feare to loſe him. Now doe not deceive thy ſelfe, thou loveſt the Lord, thou wilt

say, but is this love *to his person*, or *to his kingdome*, his goods? When thou presentest Iesus Christ alone to thy selfe, canst thou then love him? *The Virgins love him, the Harlots love him.* And there is a great deale of harlotry love in the world, to the Lord Iesus. It was one thing to love *Alexander*, another to love the King. It is true, Christ is a great King, that can doe much good or evill in the world, and so many may love him. But canst thou answere this question, *Lovest thou me?* with *Peter*, *Lord thou knowest that I love thee*, Iohn 20. Thou that knowest my heart, and the secret turnings of it, canst beare me witnesse that I love *thee*.

2. Doest thou love his company? Love is seene in nothing more than this. Doest thou love his presence, to walke with God? Doest thou observe all his dealings to thee from morning to night, refer all still unto him? Art thou still in dealings with him? Still thou hast something to doe with him; there is not an houre that passes thee, wherein thou hast not recourse unto him: when Christ takes a man unto himselfe, *hee comes and sups with him*, Apocalypse 3. Hast thou then this communion with Christ? Doth hee sup with thee, dwell with thee? Now, communion stands in speaking to another, and in hearing him speake to us. When you pray, then pray you formally, as one that is glad when the duty is over? oh if you loved the Lord, yourwould never be better, than when you are at prayer. And you would goe to prayer, as you would goe to speake

speake with your dearest friend. So do you hunger after the Word, which is the character of Christ his Will, his Love-letter? Put the case a Woman should have her Husband at the East-Indies, how welcome would a letter bee to her from him? Therefore *Moses* that loved God, *desired to see his glory*, Exodus 33. to know him better, to grow more acquainted with him. Now, that the Word doth to thee, it shewes to thee that glory which *Moses* saw.

If you love the Lord, Holy-daies and Sacrament-daies would bee as Feast-daies, and Wedding-daies, for then you meete with God more neerely. Doe you then put off your comming to the Sacrament, and would you not come neere it for the speech of some, and yet will you say that you love the Lord? where love is, there is delight. A man delights in his fellowship, whom hee loves, whom ye have not seene, yet ye love him; yea, whom, though ye see him not, yet yee believe, and joy with joy unspeakable and glorious. Doe you then delight in his presence? for delight will be in the injoying of that wee love; joy followes love.

To delight in a mans company, is that marke of love which cannot be dissembled. Dost thou then love *the appearing of the Lord Iesus*? 2 Thessalonians 3. If one should bring you newes that you must goe to the Lord, or he would come to you to morrow, would this be acceptable newes to you? Doth he bring good tidings? If a Spouse should have her betrothed husband beyond the Seas,

Seas, and should heare of his returne; if she should say, that it were the worst newes that could come to her, would you thinke that she lov'd him? No, there could not come a more welcome Messenger to thee than such a one, if thou didst love the Lord. *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord (for so saith the Spirit), from henceforth they rest from their labours.* So saith the Spirit, not so saith the Flesh. So much the more spirit a man hath, so much the more he will say, it is blessed, and the more heewill pray submittingly for it, quickly. Indeed a godly man, when the flesh is predominant, and the spirit under hatches, then he may be desirous to be spared a while; oh spare me a little, as the Spouse may sometimes wish her Husband, deferring his comming, when she is not fit to receive him; the house is not ready, not cleane enough.

Rev. 13.

A Crowne of Righteousnesse, saith the Apostle, *is laid up for all them that love the appearing of the Lord Iesus.* 1 Timothy 4 8. And *the second time shall Christ appeare to salvation, to all them that look for him*, Hebrews 9. Art thou then one that lookes for Christ, that desires nothing but union with him, hee will come to thee to thy salvation. If men looke not for him, will hee come to them to salvation? It may be in some disease, when thou canst take no pleasure in the world, you wish that you were with Christ. Nature may have a great hand in this.

But in thy youth, in the midst of all worldly contents, when thou art in thy pleasant Orchard, with

with thy Wife and Children about thee, having what thy heart can wish; canst thou say then, Now would I most willingly leave all these to goe to Christ? when you prefer his company above all things, count that delight the best, that comes from communion with him; then thou lovest the *Lord Iesus*.

Love is exceeding bountifull, apt to doe much for the Lord, and to suffer any thing gladly. The Apostle, in the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, Chapter 13. sets downe many excellent properties of Love; she that loved Christ, had a box of Oyntment; it may bee it was the best thing shee had, it may bee it was all she had, yet she bestows it on Christ. So *Abraham*, when God would have his Sonne, hee go's willingly about it; not formally, not out of necessity, but he rose up early to doe it. It may bee there will come a time when God shall need thy Wealth; it may be, thy Credit. 3

Now, you can deny him nothing, if you love him. So, *Dalilah* would not bee perswaded that *Sampson* loved her, so long as hee kept backe any thing from her. If there bee any thing so neere unto thee as thy life, and it bee told thee that the Lord hath need of it, he shall have it. Thou wilt say, It was a wise action of *David*, to poure out that water as an offering to the Lord, which he so longed for, and obtained with the hazard of the lives of three of his Worthies. As when a man hath a good bit, he will send it to his friend: so in another place, *he would not offer to the Lord of that*

which should cost him nothing, 2 Samuel 24. But what can I bestow upon the Lord, thou wilt say? If thou art a Preacher, preach the Gospel for Christ; so, every man in his calling, let him doe somewhat for the Lord, and if he shall call for thy life, let it not be deare unto thee. And as love is thus bountifull, so it *seekes not its owne*, 1 Corinthians 13. And now, how few will bae found that love Christ? wee may well complaine with *Paul*, *All men seeke their owne, and none the things of Iesus Christ*, Philemon 2. *Paul* that loved the Lord, how was hee affected? hee regarded not himselfe, tooke not care what should become of himselfe, hee tooke the care of all the Churches upon him: *Who is offended*, and so by taking offence, fals away, *and I burne not?* Art thou a Minister, and loveſt the Lord Iesus, thou wilt not be so carefull for a living, and that it be a convenient one, but thou wouldest preach as *Paul*, though for nothing; for every man might doe much for the Lord, if he sought the things of the Lord; if hee did plod with himselfe, how to bring advantage to Christ.

And then if this should come in, if I doe this, I shall hinder my estate, lose my friends, it would be nothing: the love of the Lord would be farre better to thee than any thing, Love doth much for the Lord; Faith workes by Love, he loves much, that doth much. *Paul*, as he was abundant in love, so *in labour*. If *you love me*, saith our Saviour, *keepe my Commandements*. Are you willing then to take much paines for the Lord? Doest thou

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feed the lambes of Christ? If thou art a Minister, or if thou art in the way to that calling, art thou diligent to fit thy selfe for it? And love not onely workes, but it makes that *the commandements are not grievous*. The wife may serve her husband, and the servant him, but with a different affection. The covetous man when he is before some great man that can imprison him, or put him to death may part with his wealth, or if with one that can greatly preferre him, in hope of that, he may be brought to part with his money; But willingly he will not. But you must finde delight in that you doe: when you doe a kindnesse to one that you love, you doe but doe your selfe a kindnesse on that party. And in this sense what thanks deserve you? you doe but satisfie your love. As a mother loves her child, and doth the offices of kindnesse to it with delight, though shee shall never have any thing for it. If you had this love, you would come to say, *It is meate and drinke to doe your Fathers will*. Now, you neede not bee hired to eate and drinke. Iohn 4.

Lastly, *love suffers all things*. Are you willing to suffer any thing for the Lord? when *David* did a religious act, *Michol* lookes upon him with an other eye, as men looke now on religious actions. It is no matter, saith *David*, I will beare it, for I did it to the Lord, who chose mee before thy fathers house. And if this bee to be vile, I will bee yet more vile. Can you endure to be pointed at, scoffed and mocked, for 1 Cor. 13.

the Lord? It was a sore triall to have his wife so against him, yet wee see how hee did beare it. *Bonds and afflictions*, saith *Paul abide mee in every Citie*; But none of these things move mee, *neither count I my life deare unto my selfe, so I may finish my course with joy.* Are you able to doe thus? But I cannot like, you will say, to bee put to it, you doe not know, it may bee you may lose your wealth, your credit, and respect, among those whom you loved, and this is somewhat: yet love makes it as nothing. We see when a man loves a Maide, neither Father nor Friend, nor the speech of people will move him to give over. True, this is a sinfull love, but yet shewes what the nature of love is. Nay I will goe further, you will suffer all with joy, *Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulnesse.* So when the Apostles were whipt where the shame was more then the paine, yet they rejoyced that they were thought worthy to suffer for Christ.

Acts 20. 24.

Col. 1. 11.

Acts 5.

Put all these together, Are ye bountifull, that if the Lord should put you to any cost, cost of purse, labours of life, hee should willingly have it? Doe yee take care for the things of Christ, plod how ye may glorifie him? Doe ye do much, and suffer much for the Lord? Take these notes no further then yee see reason for them: And know that this is that word of the Lord, if you love not the Lord Iesus, you are cursed.

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The next property of love is, it desires nothing so much as love againe. If a man bee serviceable to another, and not out of love, so he bee officious to him, hee is content. But love will be paid in it's owne coyne, it will not have mercy without grace. A kingdome without grace, will not content it. It is very observant in this kinde, *Quis fallere possit amantem?* They will be very curious this way. They must see love in every thing, or else they can take no delight in it. It is not a kingdome that can quiet them without the love of God.

How ever it goe with corne, wine and oyle, their prayer is, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance on us.* Psal. 4. If a mans turne were served, so he might be freed from hell, and made happy, and then love him, this man loves not the Lord. That which *Absalom* did in hypocrisie, wee are to doe in truth, Sam. 14. *What availe it mee that I enjoy* (saith he) *my lands, and that I live in Jerusalem, so long as I may not see the Kings face?* So if God should give you abundance of all your hearts can wish, free you from the fire of hell, yet this will not content you without you see his face, if you have this love. And thus if Gods people *humble themselves and seeke his face, hee will heare in heaven, and have mercy on them:* 2 Chron. 7. 14. when a people are oppressed and in captivitie, they may come to the Lord and humble themselves, but for their owne liberty, they may seeke their owne good in it, as they, *Howled on their beds for corne, wine, and oyle:* Hos. 7. 14. but Gods people

seeke his face, his favour; examine thy selfe then, if when his countenance is clouded, and he hides his face, thou art impatient, thou canst not beare it, then thou mayest assure thy selfe that thou lovest the Lord. Thus did *David Psal.* 51. when hee wanted the sense of Gods favour, how did hee complaine hee would have no deniall, and therefore never gives over intreating till he is answered.

5 Doest thou love the Lord? then thou lovest the Saints. This is a true and common note, every one hath it in his mouth, 1 Iohn 3. *If you love the Lord, you will love the brethren.* Dost thou then love the Lord, and hate evill in other men? *If you love not your brother whom you see daily, how can yee love the Lord whom yee never see?* God is remote from our eyes that wee cannot behold him. Now his image is stamped upon the Saints, and so is visible to us. Wee see them daily, they converse with us. Now, if we love not them, we cannot love God. For, the love of Christ is that holy disposition which you conceive in your minde of him: Now, the like for kinde is in the Saints. As those that doe the lusts of the Devill, are of his disposition, that is, are as it were little Devils: so in the Saints, there is the same disposition, the same minde that was in Christ Iesus for kinde.

Ob. But you will say, I would love them, if I thought they were not hypocrites.

Sol. Take heed, thou mayest persecute Christ under the person of an hypocrite: what if thou strike

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at an hypocrite in seeming? yet a true member of Christ is found wounded by thee. And when thy heart shall rise against thee, out of the side of the likenesse of religion, and true piety, what would you doe if the substance were there, if hee had grace in a higher measure? Christ pitches on this note above all others. It is farre easier to love a holy man then to love God. For hee lives amongst us, wee have him continually before our eyes. Doe not say then you love such as are a farre off, you care not for these.

But you will say I love them well enough, doe you so? Doe you delight then in their company? Are you in your naturall element when you are among them? This you will doe by a naturall instinct if you love the Lord Iesus. Againe, doe you hate sinne in all? the same ground will cause you to hate sinne, which moves you to love grace. Doe you then hate sinne as in dislike, and distate in regenerate men and their societie, bee it never so pleasant, so profitable?

Ob, Sol.

But what would you have mee to hate men then? no, but hate their sinnes, and love them with the love of pittie.

Ob.

Let thy heart melt to consider their case, and desire their good, love them, but so as it may stand with the love of the Lord Iesus. Looke then to your selves, and examine your selves by these markes, see that you have this love; if yee have it not, you are among the number of these

Sol.

these men which are to bee accursed unto death.

Ob, But I hope I deserve not so bad, my nature I hope is not so vile, as not to love the Lord Iesus.

Sol. Nay, thou hatest him, doe you not wish that there were no such Lord to come to judgement, that thou mightest live as thou pleasest? Couldest thou not wish that thou mightest ever here enjoy these pleasures, and never come at him? Now to wish that one were not, what is it but to hate him? *Quem metuunt oderunt:* Wee say men hate him whom they stand in feare of. Doe you then feare and quake at his comming? surely then you are haters of God.

Ob. But I hope we are not haters of God.

Sol. Why, this is not so strange. The Apostle tels us that there were such as *loved their pleasures more then God*, 2 Tim. 3. yea, and that there were *haters of God also*. Rom. 1. 30. And in the second commandement God threatens such as *hate him*, Exo. 20. and thou maiest bee one of them. For if you cannot endure his Company, if your heart rise against his image, it is plaine you are a hater of God.

Ob. What? you would make me out of love with my selfe. What doe you preach damnation to me? it may be all these signes are not in me; Am I then so accursed?

Sol. Yes: we doe preach damnation to all that are in such a case, and wee are to threaten the curse. And thus the Lord esteemes of thee, and it were good

good that you thought ſo of your ſelves in time. It is the Miniſters dutie to ſeperate the precious from the vile, to diſtinguiſh betweene men; To ſhew you truely what your conditions are. Therefore apply this Text unto your ſelves, every one. If I love not the Lord Ieſus, I am an *accurſed man*, yea to bee had in *execration to the death*, which might make you loath your ſelves, in duſt and aſhes. It might make ſinne alive in you, and bring you to love this *Ieſus*.

So endeth the ſecond Sermon.

A

6 JY 59

A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sermon II.

BY

IOHN PRESTON, DD.

Matt. 22. 37, 38.

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Printed by *Thomas Paine*, for *John Stafford* 1640.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

II.

BY

IOHN PRESTON, DD.

Matt. 22. 37, 38.

This is the first, and great Commandement: thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.

Psal. 31. 26.

Love the Lord O all ye his Saints.

LONDON,
Printed by Thomas Paine, for John Stafford 1640.

A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sermon III.

1 Cor. 16. 22.

If any man love not the Lord Iesus Christ, let him be had in execration, yea let him be accursed unto the death.

NOw because this love is so needfull, we will adde more signes for the triall of your selves. For we cannot be better occupied.

A first signe therefore is this, hee that loves, will bee apt to praise and speake well of that he loves, and he will exceed in it: yea, he is very glad when he heares others speake well of it. So if we did love

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the Lord, we should be apt to speake well of him, we would be much in the speech of him. When the heart is full of this love of God in Christ, *out of that abundance in thy heart, thy mouth will speak.* But thou speakest but little of God, and that little is brought in by company, thou art cold in thy praising of him: why thou doest not love him, see in *David*, a man that loved the Lord. How much was hee in the praising of him? Nay, he could not bee content to doe this alone, but hee must have all *creatures to praise him and to speake good of his Name:* Even as a servant that commends his Master, invites others to serve him. This love *enlarges the heart and opens the mouth. O Corinthians, our hearts are enlarged towards you, and our mouthes are opened,* 2 Corinthians 6. 11. This is an argument that our hearts are enlarged, that we abound in love, when our mouthes are opened. So that thy heart is straightened towards God, if thy mouth bee not open to his praises.

Ob. But I cannot speake as other men, I am no scholler, if I had elocution gifts, learning, I could thus speake.

Sol. This is no excuse, it is the nature of love to make men eloquent, the passions make eloquent. As we say, *Pectus facit eloquentes, & magna pars eloquentiæ constra animo.* Are you then apt to speake well of God? But this, you will say, is but a small matter, who doth not? Oh yes, wee are wanting in that manner of speaking of him which love requires. We doe not speake of him with

with that affection, that sensibleneſſe, that may enflame others to love him. See the Spouſe in the *Canticles*: Oh ſaith ſhe, *My love is fairer then ten thouſands.* And thus will the ſoule that loves God doe. It will *tell of his mercies abroad.* It will *ſpeake good of his Name.* And that not as a duty onely, but as a thing in which it takes eſpeciall delight: Love followes the judgement, you cannot love the Lord, but you will thinke well of him. See then what thy ſpeeches are concerning him: ſee if *thy heart doe nimbly indite, and thy tongue bee as the penne of a readie Scribe* Pſalme 45.

Conſider whether you endeavour to doe any thing for Chriſt without expoſtulating, and indenting with him. Whether you are ready to doe all things freely to him, without conſulting with another about it. *Amicitia non eſt revocanda ad calculos.* A friend muſt not bee ſtrict in taking his account, for then hee plaies but the Huckſter, he doth but buy and ſell. When thou art trying and expoſtulating then whether ſuch a duty be neceſſary or no, whether another will not ſerve the turne; this is a ſigne thou doſt want love. A Miniſter that hath this love, when he is to take a Living, will not ſo much enquire what reward he ſhall have, as what ſervice he may doe to God in it. If you did love the Lord you would not ſtand, ſaying, is it neceſſary to keepe the Lords day ſo ſtrictly? You would bee ready to doe what ever hath but a ſhadow of pleaſing him. Oh how you would be glad of ſuch a day, ſo free from

from other businesse, wherein you might sequester your selves from the world, to attend upon God, and to injoy him? So for a family prayer, thou wouldest not aske, can it not be omitted without sinne? This questioning will not stand with this love: for the person thou serveſt is the Lord, and thou must not be as a mercenary servant. A wife will bee devising things to please her husband. So, *what shall I render to the Lord* (saith *David*.) So *Paul* was *abundant in labours and sufferings*. If *Paul* would have done nothing but out of necessity, he had never done halfe so much, say then, I will even goe doe my duty, performe my taske. If I must pray in my family, then I will; If I must keepe the Lords day, I will make a shift to weare out the day; This I say argues a heart void of this love. We must know that Christ hath died to *purchase to himselfe a people Zealous of good workes*: such as doe good workes with desire or deare delight; that would faine doe a great deale more then they doe. Would you then doe no more then just will bring you to heaven as you thinke? Do you set limits to your performances? you have not this love. Why? you pray that you may serve Christ *on earth as the Angels doe in heaven*, and yet will you say such a man goes faster, it is no matter, this pace will bring mee to heaven, and so never mend it? This is a sign of no love to the Lord Iesus.

If you did love the Lord, ye should find an holy affection of anger and zeale rising against such as offend him. Anger waits on love. Love is

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an affection that makes forwards to the thing beloved: and if any thing stand in the way, Anger removes it haſtily.

If thy heart then bee not ſtirred when God is diſhonoured, his Church ſpoiled, and Religion goes downward, thou loveſt him not, can you endure to heare your ſelfe ſcandalized? No, and why? becauſe you love your ſelfe. To ſee then the bloud of the Lord Ieſus trampled on, neglected ſo, as no man ſhould regard it, to ſee the Saints in adverſity, and not to bee affected, argues that your heart is void of this love of the Lord Ieſus.

Eli when he heard the newes of *Iſraels* flight, his ſonnes death, it muſt needs grieve him, but all this while, his heart was compoſed: But the worſt newes (as uſually it doth) comes laſt. The Arke of God was taken: Then his heart was amazed, hee could no longer ſubſiſt, but hee falls downe backward and breakes his necke. But it may be ye doe not hope to attaine to the grace of *Eli*: why, looke then on his daughter in law, one of the weaker ſex; All that ill newes moved her not ſo much. Oh the Arke of God was taken, that was it which ſhee pitched upon, her ſonne that was borne could not alay this griefe.

But the Arke is not taken (you will ſay) there is not the like cauſe now with us. *Ob.*

No? are not many Churches deſolate? when you ſee ſo many Churches ranſacked beyond the Seas, doe you not ſee the Arke of God taken in a great meaſure? when you ſee Popery increaſing, *Sol.*

and the Saints wallowing in their bloud? If you take not this to heart, it is becauſe the love of *Chriſt* is not in you.

If *Chriſt* loſe a man, if *any be offended*, and fall awey, *I burne*, ſaith the Apoſtle. When the King, Ier. 36. tooke that booke and burnt it, it is noted of thoſe that ſtood by, that *they did rend their cloathes*. God takes it as a great ſigne of a prophane heart, when one ſhall not take ſuch diſhonours of his to heart, when hee rends not his cloathes at the ſight of ſuch a thing. *Paul* when he ſaw the idolatry that abounded in *Athens*, was *enflamed in his ſpirit*. Acts 17.

See what a commendation God gave to *Phineas* for his zeale againſt *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, he would have it remembred as a ſpeciall note of his love to him, which he would not let goe unrewarded. If thou doſt not then pray for the Churches welfare, if thou art not affected with the loſſe and diſadvantages of the Church, as with thy owne, thou wanteſt this love.

9 A ninth ſigne is not to dare to doe any thing that diſpleaſeth him. If you doe a thing amiſſe that would be diſpleaſing, you had rather that all the world ſhould ſee you, then him whom you love. Now you know God alwaies beholds you, you ſhould therefore bee alwaies alike carefull. *They ſhall feare the Lord and his goodneſſe*, Hoſea 4. The Lord for his goodneſſe, they ſhall feare to loſe him. Above all conſider when you have offended him, how you take that to heart. When you know there is a breach betweene you and

and the Lord, and you can be content, and rest in it, this is a shrewd signe of no love. When man and wife shall fall out, and grieve not for it, but let it passe, not seeking to be reconciled, it is signe of cold love betweene them.

Thinke with your selfe there is no man whom you professe to love, but you would not willingly provoke. And dare you say that you love the Lord, and yet yee will grieve and vexe him?

10. If you love the Lord, there would bee an hungring in you after him: there would bee still an hanging that way. All impediments would be broken through, the heart would still bee moving thitherward. It would be bending thither. It would admit no repulse. As the woman of *Canaan*, *Matth.* 15. it would not bee put off. As the stone rests not till it comes to the center, so nothing can keepe you off from the Lord, no pleasures; away with them: not any difficulties, no you cannot rest without him.

Say not then with your selfe, though you love him not now, yet I may love him hereafter, and I may love him hereafter, though not so much. No, love desires present union, it hates all delaies. Consider this: if you did repent out of love, your repentance would bee present, and what repentance is it which is not out of love?

Vse 3. To humble our selves for want of this love.

Then hence thou art to humble thy selfe, if thou art failing in this labour of love. See how great a fault it is, not to love the Lord: and learne to blame thy selfe exceedingly for it. And that

you may doe this, I will shew you what great reason you have to love the Lord.

1. The reasons wee have to love the Lord.

Consider that *hee is worthy to bee beloved.* As *David* said, *he is worthy to bee praised*, so may wee well say, he is worthy to be beloved. And why? because he hath all that is amiable in him. If you see any thing lovely in the creature, it is eminently in him. Shall not he that made the eye see? hee that made the eare heare? shall not hee that gave these perfections to the creatures have them in himselfe more eminently?

This perfection of his beauty, is that which causeth the Angels so much to admire and adore him, to bee taken up in the admiration of his excellencies. Observe that in any man whom you love; there is something not to bee beloved: But CHRIST is wholly delectable, there is nothing in him not fully to bee beloved. See how the Spouse describes him in the *Canticles*, how shee sets him forth in every part of him most to be desired. If you could but see the Lord. If it did but please him to shew himselfe unto you, as hee promised to *shew himselfe unto him that loves him*, Iohn 14, 21. If the Lord, I say, would give you a glympse of himselfe; if by the light of the Spirit you could see him, you would acknowledge him worthy of your love. And this is the reason that some love him, and others doe not, because hee discovers himselfe to some and not to others. As he did to *Moses*, where let us see a little his expression of himselfe.

The Lord, the Lord, Exodus 34. this is but the

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Casket, the Iewell is within. If Gods Spirit should open these words unto you, you would see him the faireſt of ten thouſand, *Iehovah, Iehovah.* Of every creature (you may ſay) ſomewhat it was that it is not, and ſamewhat it is that it will not be. But God is unchangeable *Jehovah*, in him is no alteration, he is not a freind to day, and none to morrow, and ſuch a friend you would deſire to chuſe: as this Name ſignifies, his immutable being, ſo his omnipotency, he is *Almightie.* Now what a Loadſtone of love is this? All the power in men, enableth them but to doe ſome things: as patience enables them to beare injurious acts; But the Lord hath all abilities, all ornaments, all excellencies, all is comprehended in this *Almightie*: So that well may ſuch a friend bee deſired.

True, will the poore ſoule ſay, he is well worth the having. But hee will not match with ſuch a match as I am. *Ob.*

Oh yes, he is wonderfully *pittifull* and *Mercifull*: as great a Prince of pitty, as of any thing elſe. *Answ.*

Merciſull: but I have no beauty, no grace in me, no worth, no repentance. *Ob.*

But God is *exceeding gracious.* Kings are ſaid to be gracious, becauſe ther is ſuppoſed ſuch a difference betweene them and their Subjects, that they can deſerve nothing of them: So *God is gracious*, hee doth not looke for any deſervings in thee. *Answ.*

But I have provoked him by ſinning, and ſinning *Ob.*

ning often: This will make him put mee off.

Answ. No, he is *of great forbearance.*

Ob. But if he doe receive me, I must carry my selfe well, pray, and doe, that which I shall never bee able to doe.

Answ. Why no, *hee is very kinde.* Looke what a kinde Father, a kinde Husband, would doe to a Child, or a Wife, they are carefull to give content: the like may you expect of the Lord. Hee will winke at many infirmities, if your desires be sound.

Ob. Though he say so, how shall I know *that he will doe it?*

Answ. To confirme this, *He is true*: he keepes covenant, and hath given ensamples of his mercy on thousands of them that feare him.

Ob. Oh, but still my sinnes are many and great.

Answ. Be it so: yet he *forgives iniquities, transgressions, and sinnes*, originall sinnes, sinnes of weaknesse, and sinnes of wilfulnesse.

This glory God shewed to *Moses*: This is the description of himselfe, such a one is Iesus Christ, O ye daughters of Ierusalem, and is hee not worthy to be beloved?

2 When thou hast considered the worth that is in himselfe, consider that hee *sues to thee for thy love.* Suppose a Prince should come and aske this at thy hands, wouldest thou deny him? The weake should sue to the stronger, but here the Lord God comes to thee for thy love.

This is that, O Israel, which hee requires of thee, that thou love the Lord thy God, Deuter. 10, 16. When such a God shall aske thy love, sue for it, shall he be denied? We (the Ministers) are but Christs spokes-men to wooe for Christ. See who it is that requires this: it is thy Soveraigne Lord that might have required thee to sacrifice thy children, thy life, thy goods, for his honour, and can he not have thy love? Now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to feare him, to love him: as if he should say, the Lord hath done great things for you, and might require great things of you againe. This may melt thee then, that hee requires nothing but thy love.

Againe consider, he hath planted this love in thy heart: shall hee not have his owne then when hee requires? shall not hee which planted the tree, eate of the fruit? shall not hee which gave this fountaine of love taste of the waters of it? 4

Againe, on whom would you bestow it, if you will not give it to the Lord? It must be bestowed on somewhat, and it is the best thing you have to bestow. It swaies & commands all in you. Doth thy wealth deserve it? Do men deserve it? Why, they are not to bee compared to the Lord. Can any man doe for thee that which he doth? besides, he forgives thee thy sinnes day by day. Think of his excellencies.

Againe, you are engaged to love him. you are married to him; you have given up your names to him in your baptisme: so that now well may I 5

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call you *an adulterous generation*, if you love him not, *Yee are witnesses against your selves this day* (saith *Ioshua*) Ioshua 24. if ye serve not the Lord. Hee takes great advantage of their promise that they had made to serve the Lord: ye are now witnesses against your selves if you doe it not.

So all that heare me this day are witnesses against themselves. For in their baptisme they tooke the Lord for their God. Is hee not your Master? where then is your feare? is he not your Father? where then is your reverence? is he not your Friend, where then is your love?

6 Againe, he hath bought us, yea, he hath overbought us. If you should see a flocke of sheepe, and heare that such a man hath paid such a price for them, farre beyond their worth, you will bee ready to say, let him have them, he is well worthy of them. And shall Christ be denied that which he hath so dearely bought? he hath bought you from the world, from the power of the devill, yea, and from your selves, so that they are not to set us on worke, *Wee are not our owne*, 1 Corinthians 6. wee are therefore to doe a mothers businesse, and that is Christs, who requireth love.

7 Besides all these generals, thinke of the particulars, which worke most upon us. See all his passages to you, how kinde he hath beene toward you. See how he hath dealt with you from your youth hitherto. Consider all his kindnesses bestowed upon thee: see also what hee hath done in forgiving thee. Thou hast sinned often, and greatly, and yet still he hath forgiven thee, and this

this is a great matter. *Shee loved much, because much was forgiven her*, Luke 7. Shee feeds thee, cloathes thee, thou hast not a nights rest but shee gives it thee, shee it is that keeps thee from all dangers; shee careth for thee when thou canst not take care for thy selfe. The creature cannot helpe thee, without shee command it to helpe thee, shee hath stood close to thee in all exigents. And this most of all affects us, in some great danger when all forsake us, wee cannot but love him most dearly that onely sticks close unto us. Thus hath the Lord done unto thee, with this *Nathan* urges *David*, and aggravates his sinne: *The Lord hath done thus and thus unto thee, and if that had not been enough, would have done more.* 2 Sam. 12. 8. Take up the same practise with your soule; the Lord hath done thus and thus for mee, and shall I not love him? would wee not hate that man that should not love and respect him from whom hee hath his whole maintenance?

Lastly, consider that hee loves thee. Now as fire begets fire, so doth love beget love. The Son of God *hath loved thee and given himselfe for thee*, Galatians 2. Consider Christ hath loved thee, and hath given a good experiment of his love, to wit, himselfe for thee. And if he had given thee himselfe whole, it had beene a gift inestimable: But he hath given thee himselfe broken, *crucified* to thee, who hast beene a rebell against him. See his love, he lookes on thee when thou thinkest not of him, he tooke care for thee when thou tookest none for thy selfe; Nay, then thought it hee not

too much to dye for thy good. Oh the height, the length, the breadth, the depth of the love of Christ which passes knowledge! you can never know this love of the Lord, it astonished *Paul*.

Ephes. 3.

All this may stirre you up to feare the Lord. This shewes you what reason you have to doe it: And it may be an intentive to you, or at the least may cause thee greatly to condemne thy self for not loving him. Let these at least make you thinke well of the Lord, and ill of thy selfe, that you cannot love. It will goe heard if hee be refused: *his wrath will be kindled*, Psal. 2. after that hee hath sued to thee, and thou rejectest him, hee will not put it up, but will make his wrath knowne on thee, which God forbid.

So endeth the third Sermon.

A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sermon IIII.

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Matt. 22. 37, 38.

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OF

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Sect. III.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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Sermon IIII.

1 Cor. 16. 22.

If any man love not the Lord Iesus Christ, let him be had in execration, yea let him be accursed unto the death.

4. *Vse.* To exhort us to love the Lord.

IF it be of so much moment to love the LORD, that they are accursed that love him not, let mee exhort you then to doe it. The motive in the Text puts a necessity upon the duty, but to draw you on by the cords of love. See what you shall get by it. It might be a strong argument, you shall perish if you doe it not: But let us see the advantages that will come to us by it.

The advantages which arise from the love of the Lord Iesus.

I will make you to keepe Gods commandements with ease and delight: and this is no small benefit. This love makes you goe about the worke, as the Ship with wind and saile. The journey must bee gone: now they that have not love, must rowe and take a great deale more paines. *This is the love of God, that you keep his commandements. And his commandements are not grievous*, 1 Iohn 3. This makes us keepe the commandements, so we may feare, you will say. Oh, but love makes them easie. It will be very hard to do them without love. How hard a taske had it beene for *Paul* to have done so much as hee did, without this love! See what love makes mothers doe to children. This *love of Christ constrained Paul*: it carried him on like wings; it compelled him to doe thus and thus. And is this then nothing? yea, it shall make you *abundant in the worke of the Lord*. For this commands all the faculties, and it windes them up to their highest pegs: and this it will make you to doe out of an inward principle. There is a great difference betwixt a horse that runs freely, and one that is forced by the Spurre: Shall not this then cause you to set a high price upon this love?

There are scarse any so desperate, but they would say, they would faine keepe GODS commandements, were they not so hard. Now this love will make them thy delight, it will make them easie and pleasant unto thee.

This is the surest testimony to your owne soule of all others, that *you are translated from death to life*.

life. An hypocrite cannot love the Lord, hee may doe the outward workes, hee may heare the Word, and be diligent in his calling. But here is the difference, he doth not this out of love. This is that distinguishing character which distinguishes a Christian; as reason doth a man. If you can finde this love of Christ, this hungring after him, that tendring of the heart towards him, that your heart is to Christ, as the Iron to the Load-stone, you must rest with him. If you can say, I have no great markes of a childe of God, I have many infirmities, but yet this I can say, I love the Lord; my life for thine, thy case is happie; heaven and earth may passe away, but thou canst not misse of thy happinesse. What ever you have without this, can bee no sound testimony unto you of your blessednesse, and this alone may secure you of it.

This love doth make you lose nothing: whereas in the loving of other things, the more you bestow, the lesse you have. When thou give'st thy heart to God, he gives thee thy heart againe, and sets it on worke for thy owne good; *Heeteacheth us to profit, and leadeth us by the way which we should goe*, Esay 48. 17. As Christ said of the Sabboath, the Sabboath was made for man: so may I say of all the commandements, when you give your hearts to the Lord, he sets them to keepe the commandements, but to this end, that it may be well with thee. *Oh that there were such a heart in this people, to feare me, and to keepe all my commandements that it might goe well with them, and their chil-*

children for ever, Deuteronomy 5. 20. Thou hast thy heart againe, when thou giveſt it to God. But here is the difference; before, thou wert but an unjuſt poſſeſſor of it; now the Lord hath made thee Steward of it; for, he hath given you leave to love your wives, children, and your lawfull recreations, onely now you love them at his appointment as he will, whereas before you did it as you liſted. Nay, the Lord doth not onely give you your heart againe, but returnes it better than it was, new-pointed. As the earth receives in the puddle water, which it ſends forth cleare and pure. All the ſtreames of thy love runne as freſh for thy good as ever they did, and more. That onely which was amiſſe in them, is taken away. Let not this feede thy underſtanding onely, but finde it good in thy practiſe.

4 By this you ſhall have much comfort and joy, and this is that which all men deſire. What is that which keepes you from loving the Lord? Oh, you have a conceit that then you muſt loſe your pleaſures, and your delights. No, it is the moſt comfortable action in the world, to love the Lord: delights follow action, as the flame the fire. Now the beſt action hath the greateſt delight. The Philoſopher could ſay, Happineſſe was to love the moſt amiable obiect, *Eſt amare optimum amabile*, to love the beſt amiable knowne, is the beſt act. *Whom not ſeeing, yet you love, ioying with ioy unſpeakable and glorious*, 1 Peter 1. It is a pleaſant thing to love a creature like thy ſelfe, thy children, thy friend. But the creature is not perfect,

fect, and it may be it loves not thee againe. But Christ is perfect, and loves thee, thou canst not lose any love by loving of him. Oh what a pleasant thing it is to love the Lord, to live with him, to sup and dine with him, to be able to say, *I am my welbeloveds, and my welbeloved is mine!* When you shall consider the world hates you, what a comfort will it be, to know that the Lord loves you! that when the world uses you ill, you may flye unto Christ his bosome, and lay open all your grievances to him. To love, and to be beloved, are the most pleasant actions. Now to love the Lord Jesus, is so much the more pleasant, than the loving of other things, as he is a more excellent object than other things. Besides, is not every thing best in its owne place, conformed to its owne rule, carried to its owne end? Take it in thy body, when all the parts of it are strait, all the faculties and humours in a right temper, serving to their proper ends, then there is delight and comfort: so, Love, when it is setled upon its owne object, sets all things straight, whence wonderfull joy cannot but follow; *Amor rectus omnia recta habet*, as the Schoolman well observes.

Consider this, the love of the Lord makes you a better man, gives you a greater excellency, which is a thing which all men desire. Looke on the excellencie of the creatures, it proceedes from their formes; as the excellencie of a Pearle above other stones comes from its forme: for we know that the matter of all these things is common. Now the object to the faculty, hath the

property of the forme; for it gives name and distinction. Now this love makes God and spirituall things, as it were the forme of the will. And according to this forme is the Excellencie of the man. Every man is better or worse, as his love is pitched on a better object. He that loves a base thing, is base; and hee that loves a thing somewhat better, excels that man; but hee that loves spirituall things, is the most noble. Looke on the lower faculties, when the sensitive appetite enjoyes its proper object, then a man hath his perfection in that kinde. Thus, when the will is fixed on Jesus Christ, its best object, then a man hath his full perfection. If water be united to Wine, its made better; when the body is united to the soule, how glorious a creature is it! how glorious a creature then will thy soule be, when by love it is united to the Lord! This love puts a greater excellencie on the soule, than the soule doth on the body. Love brings the soule to God, and makes him all in all to us; so that what wee cannot desire, we may have in him: have ye not then cause to wish that yee loved the Lord? True, you have said enough to enflame us. But how shall we doe it my brethren? if you are brought unfainedly to desire it, halfe the worke is done; when the Disciples prayed, *Lord increase our faith*, *Matth.* 18. Christ answers, If you have faith, but as a graine of Mustard seed, you may say unto this Mountaine, be thou moved, and it shall be moved. But this is not the meanes to get faith. No, but this commends faith. And if out of

Meanes to love the Lord.

Mat. 18.

this commendation they could come to prize and admire it, and so pray earnestly for it, God would give it them. Let this therefore be the first meanes to helpe thee to the getting of this, to the *Lord Jesus*.

First, pray heartily for it, Lord I desire to love thee, I see thee most amiable, and would faine love thee. This Petition is according to thy will, Lord grant it me. 1

How would this prevaile, how could God put off such a request?

But I have prayed, and I have not obtained it. *Ob.*

But hast thou prayed importunately, as the woman to the unjust Judge without giving over? *Sol.* This is a precious grace, and therefore God will have us bestow some paines in the getting of it. We shall not obtaine it easily, that so we may prise it the more, and keep it the more charily. *The grace of Christ*, saith *Paul, was abundant with me in faith and love*, 1 *Tim.* 11. 14. This is that which the Apostle magnified so much, that God had given him love. The grace of Christ was abundant towards him in giving him love.

But how doth prayer doe this? *Quest.*

That little love which moved thee to pray, by exercise, is increased and is become greater. *Answ.* 1.

Prayer brings thee in acquaintance with God. Before acquaintance there may be a wishing well to another, but there cannot be that love to another which is required in friendship. 2

And it may be Christ will shew himselfe unto thee, 3

thee, as wee see, when hee himselfe, *Matth. 17. prayed, his garments were changed, and hee was transfigured.*

4 But especially prayer doth this by prevailing with God, as we see the prayers of the blinde man
1 prevailed with Christ. And doe you thinke that Christ now in Heaven hath put off these kinde affections which he had on the earth? will hee not also heare, if you should pray to him?

Ob. But this you will say is a common meanes to obtaine all grace.

Answ. Yes: but of this love in a speciall manner: because love is the most peculiar gift of the Holy Ghost. Now the Holy Ghost is obtained by Prayer. Our hearts are so carnall, so fleshly, that we cannot love the Lord, and he is so holy, so good, that we can no more love him, unlesse hee himselfe kindle this flame of love in our hearts, than cold water can heat, unlesse it had another principle. Contend therefore and strive with the Lord for his Spirit which workes this love, who

Coloss. 1. 8. hath *declared also unto us your love in the Spirit.*

Secondly, desire the Lord to shew you himselfe, that Iesus Christ would manifest himselfe unto you. And this is the greatest meanes of all, to worke love. He *that hath my Commandements, and keepeth them, is he that loveth me, and hee*

John 14. 21. *shall be loved of the Father, and I will love him, and shew my selfe unto him,* when Christ shall shew himselfe to you, when he shall open the clouds, and let you see his beauty, his glory, Oh then you cannot but love him.

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There is a great difference betwixt the Ministers shewing of you Christ, and his excellencies, and the Holy Ghosts. Though wee could speake with the tongue of Angels, yet it would be but as the dead letter to Christs shewing of himselfe. When he shall shew you your vilenesse, his excellency, your sinfulnesse, his holinesse, your miserery, his mercies, you must needs love him. *Paul* when he had revealed Christ, what hee could, to the Ephesians, he prayes for them, that *God would give them the Spirit of wisdome and revelation*, Ephesians 1. 18. As who should say, the labour is all lost, if you should see no more than I preach. You love not a man till you know him your selfe; the Lord shewed himselfe to *Moses*, *David*, *Paul*, which made them love him so much. Goe therefore to the Lord, and pray as *Moses*, *Lord shew mee thy glory*; and beg it earnestly at his hands: and that which was done extraordinarily, shall be done to thy soule. That was but a shewing of the Lord by a right light, which is done more or lesse to every one.

But this is an act of the Lord, what shall I doe to it? *Qb.*

Consider what the Scripture sayes of him, what the Saints say of him, but most of all what he hath beene to thee. See with what patience, love, and mercy, hee hath carryed himselfe towards thee, as when we converse with a man, out of his severall actions we gather his disposition, and so frame an Idea of him in our minde. *Sol.*

We must humble our selves, labour to see our 3

miserable conditions, for that will bring love. So *Paul* when he considered that hee was the worst of all, it made him love more then them all. So *Mary* when she conceived how unfit she was to conceive by the Holy Ghost, she sung that song. When we looke on our selves, and see our owne sinnes and miseries, our love to Christ will bee increased. When a man shall have a true apprehension of himself and his misery, and can expect nothing but death and damnation, and then Christ should come and say, no; But hee shall live: this wounds a mans heart with love. Looke on your secret sinnes, your relapses, your misery by sinne, and then on Christs comming with his mercies and favours, and you cannot but love him. I say looke on thy sinnes, weigh them with their circumstances. Thinke that *after so many adulteries* committed against Christ, yet that he should say, *If you will come in, yet will I receive you*, this might shake thee and melt thy heart. He that loveth not the Lord, sees not his misery, not that good hee hath by him.

Jerem. 2.

4 Strengthen thy faith: for the stronger thy faith is, the greater will thy love be. A strong hand rids more worke then a weake. Take a man excellent in all gifts whom thou much admirest, yet if hee loved not thee, thou wouldest not much care for such an one: so though thou seest much excellency in *Christ*, yet thou canst not love him, unlesse thou hast a perswasion that he loves thee. But how shall I know that he will love me? hee hath made it knowne that he is thine, and that he

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is willing to become thy familiar friend; God hath given him in marriage to thee. *To us a child is borne, to us a sonne is given.* And Christ himselfe hath shewne sufficiently his love unto thee. He hath spent his bloud for thee, yea, he continuelly speakes to his Father in thy behalfe, yea, hee sues to thee for love, he loves thee first, and sues to thee, as the man doth to the woman; thou maist be perswaded therefore that he loves thee. Esay 9.

But I am not fit to be a Spouse to Christ. *Ob.*

It is true, and he knew that well enough. Hee will take thee a Blackamoore, and afterwards will *put beauty on thee*, Ezekiel 35. 16. Stand not thou on thy unfitnesse when he is thy Suitor. *Answ.*

But it may be he stands thus and thus affected to such and such persons, and how shall I know that the Lord loves mee and is willing to take mee? *Ob.*

I can say nothing to thee but this, and that is sufficient, thou hast his generall promise made to all, *Mark.* 16. *Goe preach the Gospel to every creature.* There is a generall mandate given to Ministers to preach the promise to all, and why wilt thou make exceptions where God hath made none, and enterline his promises? Wee are commanded to offer Christ to all, every one that will come may come and drinke of the waters of life freely. The offer is generall, though but some imbrace it. *Answ.*

But I want godly sorrow for my sinnes. And this is required before we can receive Christ. *Ob.*

Yet deceive not thy selfe, the matter is not whether *Answ.*

whether thy humiliation be more or lesse, only come. The promise is made to all that come, they shall be refreshed. Indeede thou wilt not come till thou art somewhat humbled. Thou wilt not flye to the City of refuge till thou art pursued by the avenger of blood. But if thou come at all, God will fulfill his promise. Sticke not so much on the degree of thy humiliation. Take a man that hath committed high Treason, for which he is condemned and brought to the place of execution, ready to suffer, but then there is a pardon offered him: And take another guilty of the same fact, but as yet not condemned, and bring him a pardon, he is even as joyfull as the other, for he saw his case was even as bad, onely it was not so farre gone, and he hath not lived so long in sorrow. So some mens sinnes are grosser, and their sorrow more violent, other sinnes are lesse, but yet such as they see them like to damne them; they therefore are humbled as truly, though not so violently. Therefore though thou hast not had so much sorrow as others, not felt those terrours of the Almighty, yet if thou hast so much as will bring thee to Christ, and make thee sticke close unto him, so as thou wouldest not leave him for any thing in the world; it is enough, thou shalt have him. Why then stick you? what hinders your faith? The impediments must be on Gods part, or on your part: But it is not on Gods part, for his promise is full, and large, most free; neither is there any on thy part, for there is nothing required in thee, for which hee shall set

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his love upon thee. There are no merits desired on thy part, onely accept him, receive him, hee will afterwards put some lines upon thee. Art thou willing to take Christ for thy husband, for better and worse, with a crowne of Thornes, as well as Glory? then the match is concluded, thou maist be sure that Christ will be thine.

Ob. But I have renewed my sinnes, and have fallen into divers relapses. I still provoke him and fall backe, and GOD will not endure such a wretch.

Answ. Yet he forgives sinnes of all sorts, he is *abundant in mercy*, he is still forgiving, and never gives over. There is a *fountaine opened to Iudah and Jerusalem for sinne and for uncleanesse*, Zach. 12. vers. 13. There is a fountaine, not a cisterne, to wash in, which may be drawne dry. Onely this caveat must be put in, that we allow not our selves in any knowne sinne, but that wee maintaine warre continually against sinne, and by no meanes admit any peace with *Amaleck*.

5. Another meanes is, to remove the impediments of love, which are two especially, *Strangenesse*, and *worldly mindednesse*. Strangeness dissolves all friendship. By this meanes the interest of friendship may be broken off. This strangeneſſe breeds fearefulneſſe when we goe to God, and fearefulneſſe weakeneſſe of love: whereas boldneſſe is the nurſe of it. *Herein is our love made perfect, that we have boldneſſe in the day of the Lord Jeſus.* As by neglecting fellowship with the Saints, we come to loſe our acquaintance wee had

had towards them: so the neglecting of maintaining our acquaintance with God, brings us quite at last to leave him. Draw neere therefore to God continually, and this will increase your love to him. Be therefore oft speaking to him and hearing him speake to you.

Be much in prayer, and often in reading and hearing. And doe not these things customarily, and unawardly, but with life and affection: goe to prayer as you would goe to speake with your most deare friend, whom you most of all delight to talke with. Let it be pleasant to thee to converse with him in all things; when thou hast any injury befallen thee, goe and make thy cause knowne to him; and when any sinne hath escaped thee, whereby he may be offended, give not over till reconciliation be made, and thy friendship renewed. Looke especially to thy wayes, for sinne alienates and restraines a man from God: therefore see that that bee removed as much as may be.

Worldly mindednesse also hinders the love of God. This is the uncircumcision of the heart. Hence is that, the Lord thy God will *circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, that thou mayest live.* And uncill the heart be circumcised, it is filled with the love of the World, so that hee cannot love the Lord, at least, with all his heart, as hee ought.

There is no such quench-coale to the love of God, as the love of the World. Pleasures and

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the love of carnall things are very apt to ſteale away our hearts from God before we are aware. If we looke not more narrowly to it, they may doe it. Examine your owne hearts, and ſee if by how much the more you love the World, by ſo much the leſſe you are affected to the Lord. Theſe things, as *Abſalom*, ſteale away our hearts from God, as he did the people from his Father. If thou findeſt not that love to God, which formerly hath beene, ſee what hath come betweene God and thy heart. Looke if ſome pleaſure or luſt have not crept in betweene: for theſe will ſeparate betweene God and thee. See if there be not in thy underſtanding conceits of things to be better then indeed they are: for theſe will turne the heart from the Lord; but above all, looke to thy will and affections.

FINIS.

FINIS.

6 JY 59

A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sermon V.

BY

IOHN PRESTON, DD.

Matt. 22. 37, 38.

This is the first, and great Commandement: thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.

Psal. 31. 26.

Love the Lord O all ye his Saints.

LONDON,
Printed by *Thomas Paine*, for *John Stafford*, 1640.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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A HEAVENLY TREATISE OF THE DIVINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Sermon V.

1 Cor. 16. 22.

If any man love not the Lord Iesus Christ, let him be had in execration, yea let him be accurſed unto the death.

NOw the next thing wee have to doe, is to ſhew what kinde of love the Lord accepts; for hee will not take any kinde of love that is offered him, but onely ſuch a love as he calls for, as hee requires.

Thou muſt love him with all thy might, and with all thy ſtrength. A publike perſon may doe more then a private. His example may doe much, or

or he may command others, if not to doe good, yet to refraine from evill.

God desires that thou love him with all thy strength; if thou knowest much, thou must doe much. Besides some things thou canst doe, namely, which others cannot doe without great difficulty. As some men are temperate, some patient by nature. If thou art such an one, God requires more of thee then of another, for he accounts that which thou canst doe, without setting thy might to it, as nothing. It is not enough for thee to love the Lord, but thou must love him with thy might. The might of a rich man, of a Magistrate, of a Scholler, or whatsoever thou art, when thou shalt come to the Lord with a small pittance, when thou hast opportunity to doe a great deale more, the Lord will not take it at thy hands. As a Landlord will not receive a small parcell, when the Tenant may pay a greater summe. Neither is this a thing indifferent, for you to doe, or not to doe: for *God requires much of him, to whom he hath given much.* Hee gives us all talents which he puts as prizes in our hands, which he expects we should lay out according as we have received. *Paul* did no worke of supererogation, though he was *abundant in the workes of the Lord*, continually setting himselfe about the worke with his whole strength.

2 Thou must love him above all things else; Above all creatures, above that which is most deare unto thee, yea, above thy selfe. And if thou dost not so, thou loveſt him but as a creature

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which will not serve his turne. Hee hath done more for thee then any creature hath or can doe. He hath dyed for thee, hath given himselfe crucified for thee, he deserves therefore more love then thy pleasures, profits, or then any friend thou hast. You are therefore to love him above all, to imbrace & cleave to him chiefly, to make him wholly thine.

But how can he (you will say) be wholly mine, seeing so many have their parts in him? *Ob.*

Yes, hee is wholly thine, and thou must bee wholly his. He is infinite, and so hath no parts, but is entire to every one, as every line drawne to the Center, may challenge the whole Center for it's owne, though there be a thousand lines beside. *Answ.*

But what? must I so love the Lord, that I may not love earthly things? *Ob.*

Yes: thou mayest love them, so that it be not with an adulterous love. Thou mayest love them for God, as by them you may be enabled to serve God the better. *Answ.*

But how shall I know this adulterous love? *Ob.*

When you love any thing, so as it lessens your love to your husband, that is an adulterous love. As when thou lovest some pleasure and delight so, as it takes up the minde and hinders thee in hearing, and will not suffer thee to pray without distraction, but thy thoughts must be upon it, this love is adulterate love. Thou mayest rejoyce, yea so as if thou rejoycest not. As this joy hinders not thy walking with God, so thou may. *Answ.*

eſt labour in thy calling with a love to it, yet ſo as it doth not draw away thy heart from God.

Ob. But this is very difficult (will ſome ſay.)

Anſw. No, it is eaſie. When God hath put this love into thy heart, the neceſſity of it may make it eaſie. Thou mayeſt doe it, or thou canſt not bee ſaved. Indeede it is impoſſible for a man that hath ſet his heart on riches, to remove it off againe of himſelfe. And in this ſenſe Chriſt ſpeakes, when he ſayes, *It is ſo hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdome of heaven.* But when God hath wrought this love in thee, and hath revealed to thee the emptineſſe and vanity of other things, it will be eaſie.

Ob. But I am not able to love the Lord above my ſelfe and all other things.

Anſw. Yes, thou mayeſt, if once thou art throughly perſwaded that hee is thy chiefeſt good, and how miſerable thou art without him, then wilt thou bee content to forſake all, and to cleave to him alone.

A man that ſowes Corne is content it ſhould die, ſo as it may bee quickned againe and bring forth encreaſe. And therefore *Paul*, though hee ſaw the outward building of his body goe to decay, he cared not, ſo long as he *was renewed in the inner man*. So when thou ſeeſt thy good conteined in him more then in thy ſelfe, when thou ſeeſt thy happineſſe laid up in him, thou wilt eaſily bee perſwaded to leave thy ſelfe to injoy him. For thou loſeſt nothing by loſing thy ſelfe, thy whole happineſſe is in God.

Againe, thou must be *rooted and grounded in Love*. This is that which the Apostle so prayes for, for the Ephesians, *Ephesians* 3. 17. There is a certaine love by fits which God accepts not. When men come and offer to God great promises like the waves of the Sea, as bigge as mountaines, oh they thinke they will doe much for God. But their mindes change, and they become as those high waves, which at last fall levell with the other waters. If a man should proffer thee great kindnesses, and thou shouldest afterwards come to him to make use of him, and hee should looke strangely upon thee, as if hee were never acquainted with thee, how wouldest thou esteeme of such love! If wee are now on, now off in our love, God will not esteeme of such love, and if you be not rooted in your love, you will be unstable. Let then your love bee well rooted, let the foundation be good on which it stands: now that is on two things.

1 Wherein grounded love doth stand.

1. This love must be *founded in faith*. Therefore *Ephesians* 3. when the Apostle had prayed that they might be strengthened in faith, he addes this also, that they *might be grounded* in love. When thou art once rooted in faith, thou shalt bee grounded in love. When therefore you come to beleeve, and consider whether Iesus Christ belong to you, or no, doe it not overly and slightly, but doe it thorowly, Sift every thing to the bran, give not over till thou art fully satisfied, till thou canst answer all objections, and rest in this perswasion, that all is most true which hath been re-

revealed to thee of the Lord Iesus Christ, and it is good for thee to rest upon it.

2 Your love must bee built upon his Person. If you love his, and not him, you will be unstable in your love. If thou loveſt him in his Person, thou changeſt not, for thy love will bee constant. But if thou love him for that hee hath done for thee, because hee hath done thee much good, and given thee many favours, and tokens of his love, and kept thee from many troubles, when hee changes his dealing towards thee, thou wilt change thy love to him. Thou wilt then doe as *Iob*, receive good from the hand of the Lord, and also evill. Put case God should take from thee, and send one affliction in the necke of another, this will try thy love, whether in this case thou wilt sticke close unto him. Sometimes God hides his face from his children, and *writes bitter things against them*: If then thou canſt love him, thy love is on his Person, a constant love.

1 Another condition of our love is, that *it must be diligent*. The Apostle commends the Thessalonians *effectuall faith and diligent love*, 1 *Thessalonians* 1. 3. If you say you love the Lord, and yet will doe nothing for him, you have not that love which God accepts. This love is operative, diligent, and not idle, and dead. Wee regard not a dead drugge, a dead plant, wee cut it up and caſt it away: even so doth the Lord esteeme of a dead love, and love that shewes not it's life, it's diligence to obey God. This love will cause thee to put on new apparell, to adorn thy life so,

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as thy love may take delight in thee. This will make thee carefull to beautifie thy selfe with the graces of the Spirit. See therefore whether thy love prepare thee for Christ. This love doth that which *Iohn Baptist* did. It prepares men for the receiving of the Lord. If thou wilt come then before him in thy old garments, it is a signe thou lovest him not. Againe, the operativenesse of it, is seene in opening thy heart to him, when he offers himselfe unto thee. This will give thee a capable heart to entertaine him, that hee may dwell plentifully in thee. This doth make thee *comprehend with all Saints, what is the height, and bredth, and length, and depth of the love of Christ.* This love is diligent in cleansing the heart, that it will suffer nothing to remaine there that may be offensive to the Lord God that dwels with his people. This love therefore will suffer no sluttish comer to remaine in the heart, but keepes all cleane. *It clenses a man from all filthinesse of flesh and Spirit*, 2 Corinthians 5.

Ephes. 3.

Lastly, the diligence of love is seene in keeping of his commandements. If thou doest nothing for the Lord, thou lovest him not. So much love as thou hast, so much care will there be in thee to doe his will; so much fire, so much heat to stir for his glory: So much love, so much desire to walke in perfect obedience before him.

The object on whom our love must be set.

And now wee come to the object upon whom our love must be placed, *The Lord Iesus.* Consider whom it is, whom, if you love not,

revealed to thee of the Lord Iesus Christ, and it is good for thee to rest upon it.

2 Your love must bee built upon his Person. If you love his, and not him, you will be unstable in your love. If thou lovest him in his Person, thou changest not, for thy love will bee constant. But if thou love him for that hee hath done for thee, because hee hath done thee much good, and given thee many favours, and tokens of his love, and kept thee from many troubles, when hee changes his dealing towards thee, thou wilt change thy love to him. Thou wilt then doe as *Iob*, receive good from the hand of the Lord, and also evill. Put case God should take from thee, and send one affliction in the necke of another, this will try thy love, whether in this case thou wilt sticke close unto him. Sometimes God hides his face from his children, and *writes bitter things against them*: If then thou canst love him, thy love is on his Person, a constant love.

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Ephes. 3.

Laſtly, the diligence of love is ſeene in keeping of his commandements. If thou doeſt nothing for the Lord, thou loveſt him not. So much love as thou haſt, ſo much care will there be in thee to doe his will, ſo much fire, ſo much heat to ſtir for his glory: So much love, ſo much deſire to walke in perfect obedience before him.

And now wee come to the object upon whom our love muſt be placed, *The Lord Ieſus.* Conſider whom it is, whom, if you love not,

The object on whom our love muſt be ſet.

I pronounce you thus accursed. It is the Lord Jesus, he is your Lord, your Prince, your Saviour, your Messias, your Prophet; so that hee which loves him not, is worthy to be accursed.

First, he is *our Lord*. Now, to run from an ordinary Master is punishable, to rebell against an ordinary King deserves death, but he is more, our Lord and King is a more speciall bond. Besides, that he hath made us, and preserves us, we are his by purchase, and he hath bought us deere, hee hath shed his blood for us: so that hee that will not love this Lord, let him be accursed.

2 Secondly, againe he is our Saviour, and in this respect love is now more due to God, then in time of innocency. When *Adam* broke the Covenant and made shipwrack, Christ offers himselfe a Saviour. Now if wee will not receive him, there is no more hope. He is the *secunda tabula*, left to us after shipwrack, which if wee let goe, wee cannot escape eternall destruction.

3 Lastly, he is our Prophet, *that Messias, Iohn 4.* which *tels us all things*. That great Prophet whom *Moses* foretold, whom if we believe not, we must be for ever accursed. The time of our ignorance God regarded not, but now hee will have an eye to us, after that the light hath shone unto us, and he hath revealed himselfe, when this our Prophet hath come unto us and shew'd him-selfe unto us. Now God claimes our love: and if now we refuse to love him, and to come in-

to him, we are rebels. Yea, he is our *Priest*, and would reconcile God unto us. Yea, he is made unto us a *King*, to subdue our lusts and rebellious affections, to draw us to himselfe, as it were by force: So that now if we love him not, wee deserve the curse. Now marke, the Lord hath joyned these two together, *the Lord Iesus*. We must take heede that we separate them not. And we must see that wee take him not onely as a Saviour, but also as a Lord. He is not onely the Authour of the remission of our sinnes, but he is our Lord to rule us. The preaching of the Gospel is nothing but the offering of Christ, his whole person, and so you must take him, as a subject, to bee your Lord, as a Spouse to be ruled and guided by him, and then wee shall have the benefit which arises thence. We are willing to part with the sweete, but we will have none of the sowre: as that young man would have hed Christ, but he would not part with his wealth for him. But Christ tels him that he must either part with him or them. Canst thou be content to fare as I doe? to be rejected & scorned in the world as I am? then well & good, thou mayest follow me, but otherwise thou canst not. And if thou art content to doe thus, to suffer persecution, and to forgoe all for him, thou shalt have him, and all the benefits that come by him; if not, thou art not worthy of him: hee that believes not the Lord Iesus, is condemned already. i. e. Hee that takes him not when hee is offered, is in the state of

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of condemnation. We must see therefore that we take his whole person, as hee is a Lord, as well as he is a *Saviour*, and not the latter without the former. *If any man love not the Lord Iesus, let him be had in execration, yea let him be accursed to the death.* The Apostle curses such as love him not, with a double curse. He expresses it in two languages. They are men set apart to evill, appointed to destruction; as some men are set apart to good, so are these to evill. They are shut up in prison, such as God hath set himselfe against. His eyes are continually upon them for evill. Thus shall he be accursed that loves not the *Lord Iesus*. There shall be a curse on his soule, *for matter of grace*, that as Christ cursed the figtree, when hee came and found no fruit upon it, *never fruit grow more on thee, and it withered away*: So when Christ is offered, and this Gospell preached, and thou refuseſt this grace, thou mayest find Christ to curse thee, that thou be ever barren in the matter of grace. And if perhaps thou thinkest this no great matter, the curse goes further. Thou shalt bee cursed *from the presence of the Lord*. Thou shalt have no part nor portion in the light, sweetnesse and comfort of his favour. And this *Cain* tooke to heart, though he were a wicked man, and had before but Gods common favour: and so *Saul* was exceedingly cast downe, when as God would not answer him by any of those usuall meanes: but is this such a matter to bee excluded from his presence? yea, and at the time

Of the curse of those that love not the Lord Iesus.

time of death you shall find it somwhat, yea in troubles you shall see it a dreadfull thing (as they did) to want him to stand your friend. As *Saul* did, though in his prosperity he little regarded it, yet when the Philistines came upon him, he was driven to his wits end, because the Lord would not answer him. But these are but Spirituall things, I see le them nor, you will say. But yet the curse goes further, *You shall be cursed also from the earth*, that is, from earthly comforts, which it yeelds to others. Now thou shalt bestow all thy travell and paine upon it, and be never the better for it.

But many a man receives him not, and yet is not thus accursed. *Ob.*

Indeed we see it not many times, and it may be, the time of execution is not yet come. Thou mayest have *Cains* priviledge, though thou art accursed, that none shall kill thee presently: Thou mayest enjoy thy health and wealth, and no man lay hold on thee here to hurt thee. But thou art reserved to a more solemne day of punishment. And yet the curse goes a step further, thou shalt *be cursed eternally*. But that thou wilt say, is a great way off; and you need not feare it yet. But consider what eternity is, what those dayes of darkneſſe will be, when the Sun of comfort shall set, and never rise againe upon thee. When it shall be alwayes perfect night, and never day. When God shall open all the treasures of his wrath, and powre them with full fury upon thee, when the storme of vengeance shall never bee *Answ.*

blowne over, but thou ſhalt bee overwhelmed in the midſt of all miſerie, as the old world was in the deluge.

Vſe. If this be the caſe of men that refuſe, yea, that love not the Lord, then take heed to your ſelves. Wee the Miniſters offer you Chriſt when wee preach, and you ſit negligently before us, minding other things, not caring to take the Lord. Take heed: this is your portion to be thus accurſed.

The Goſpell hath two parts; if you take Chriſt, you ſhall be happy, you ſhall be ſaved. But if you will not love him and imbrace him, you ſhall be damned. Therefore thinke not that there is nothing but hony in it: yea there is a ſting that followes it, if it be neglected: Miniſters are not to goe a begging in offering the Goſpell, but are as Ambaſſadors of the Lord of Heaven. If men will receive our meſſage, ſo it is, otherwiſe the duſt which we ſhake off from our feet, ſhall be a witneſſe againſt you, that ſo God will ſhake you off. God will not have his Goſpel refuſed, his Son deſpiſed; and therefore he counſels us, to *kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and wee periſh all in his wrath*, Pſalm 2. Though hee be a Lamb, and have behaved himſelfe meekly amongſt us, yet if wee provoke him, wee ſhall know that he can ſhew himſelfe a Lyon. If hee be not entertained in the ſtill voice, he will come in fire, in a wind that ſhall rend the rockes in ſunder. Thus he deſcribes himſelfe, *One that hath feet like burning braſſe, out of whoſe mouth proceeds*

a fiery sword, Revelation 1. *Moses* went first to *Mount Gerizim*, to blesse the people; and if that would not move them, he go'sup to *Mount Ebal*, and thence curses them: so the Apostle before exhorts & perswades them to the love of Christ, but if they will not imbrace him on fair termes, he tels them what shall follow, they must be accursed.

But what if I take not the Lord at this instant? I hope this curse will not befall me. *Ob.*

It is true, we cannot say so; for while this time lasts, wee are still commanded to offer Christ; yet there will come a time, when there will come forth a Decree which shall never be revoked. Take heed therfore, for this is very dangerous. The Lord will not suffer his Gospel to be abused, or neglected: when once the Husbandmen refused the Son, they were presently *cast out of the vineyard*, Mat. 21. This offends God more than any sinne that wee can commit. To refuse Christ offered, is worse than drunkenesse, theft, adultery, or the like, which men count the grossest sins. *My people would none of me, therefore I gave them up to their owne hearts lusts.* This refusing him, made him swear that they should never enter into his rest. As the Gospel offers greater favour than the Law; so, *swifter damnation* attends the neglect of it. My brethren, take heed *that you receive not the grace of God in vain.* While it is called to day, *harden not your hearts*; yea, take heed of refusing it now. For, *Answ.*

you know not whether this offer may ever bee made you againe; and if it be, thou knoweſt not whether thou ſhalt have the grace to receive it, or no. Know, that the ſame Goſpel *is a ſavour of life unto life*, to ſuch as receive it; but unto the others, *of death unto everlaſting death.*

Ob. But the Goſpel is continued ſtill.

Anſw. It is true: but how many are there that live in the congregation, and are never a whit the better, though they hear the Word daily, becauſe by the contempt of it, it becomes the ſavour of death to them, and their hearts are hardned, ſo that they ſhall never receive good by it?

FINIS.

6 JY 59

Good *Reader*, if thou wilt ſee the reaches of a devout ſoule after this love of *Chriſt*, expreſſed in theſe pious Sermons, reade this Soliloquy following.

A SOLILOQVY OF A DEVOVT SOVLE TO CHRIST, PANTING AFter the love of the LORD IESUS.

Thou Love of all loves, thou chiefeſt of ten thouſand; thou lovedſt me before I was, thou doſt love me when I am, thou doeſt love me (if I bee thine) when I am here no more. *Thy Loves are better then wine*, but mine are worſe thē gall and wormewood. Thou loveſt mee who deſerve leſſe then nothing, I love not thee who deſerveſt more then all things. I have hid my ſelfe from thee as *Adam*, yet thou haſt *pierced through the darke cloud*, and loved me. Thou haſt opened thy ſelfe in the face of my ſoule, yet in the ſight of this Sun I have not loved thee. No baſeneſſe of

of mine hath closed thy eyes, and kept thy heart from me: yet every base pleasure, and pleasing lust hath kept my heart and eye from thee. Without my love to thee I cannot have my happinesse *applyed*, and *enjoyed*. It is *Faith* that marries thee to me: but this faith must *worke by love*, or my marriage will end in a fruitlesse barrennesse, and faithlesse separation. Hitherto therefore I have loved thee, but *for lust*, not *for love*. I would have thee save me, but I would not honour, and please thee. I can thus think of my disloyalty towards thee; but thou knewest it before I thought it, and more then I can speake or thinke. Thou doest *thinke thoughts of love and peace to me*, but I minde the abuse of thy love, and the too late repentance of thee *upon my owne termes*. How can I be acceptable to thee, (*My Love, my Dove, my undefiled,*) Thou spreadest out thy hands, and art ready for *blessing me*: but if I open my head, heart, hand, I am apt to receive nothing but *Anathema*, *Maranatha* from thee. Can love come to enmity, heaven to hell? I am hell (*my Lord*) thou art heaven? I am hatred, thou art Love. Thou *shewest hatred*, yet in my *wisdome am I very enmity*. Can I then expect either to have the *blessing* of Love, or to avoide the *curse* of not loving? *Oh shew me thy face, for it is lovely.* Thou hast often shewed me thy riches, and I have loved them: but oh shew me thy selfe, that I may love thee. I have seen thy goodnes, mercy, compassion, merit, salvation, and have cried out, (*My blessed Iesus*) make these mine. Now

let me ſee thy ſelfe, that thou *my beloved mayſt be mine*, and all thoſe riches in thee. From the ſight of thy riches I have deſired to preſerve my ſelfe: from ſeeing thy ſelfe I ſhall deſire to draw neere to thee, and to cleave to thee for ever. O thou whom my ſoule deſires to love, *ſhew me then where thou lieſt at noone*, that I may ſee thee! I know where I ſhall finde thee at the night of my life. I ſhall finde thee ſitting on yonder throne, ready to ſay, either, *Come ye bleſſed*, or, *Goe yee curſed*. I doe not know whether ſo ſhort a view ſhall bring me to heare either the one, or the othre. Shew me then where thou lieſt *at this my noone*. Now thy Sun doth ſhine upon this my tabernacle, and I have ſome time to behold thy beauty, that I may be in love with thy perſon: where then ſhall I finde thee? if I looke to *mount Tabor*, I ſee thee in glory, and I cannot but love thee for that. If I looke *to the Garden*, I ſee thee lying on the cold ground, ſweating *drops of blood* for mee, and I cannot but love thee for that. If I looke to Golgotha, I ſee thee nayled *to the Croſſe*, and thy heart broached, that I may drinke thy blood and live, and I cannot but love thee for that. If I looke to *mount Olivet*, I ſee thee aſcending *farre above all heavens*, and I cannot but love thee for that alſo. Indeed in *Tabor* thou hadſt viſible glory, but it ſoone vaniſhed: in the *Garden* and *Golgotha*, thou hadſt *little* viſible *beauty why I ſhould deſire thee*: and in *Olivet*, thou waſt quite carried out of my ſight. If then thou lieſt for mee no where elſe, what hope have I to love thee, O thou to be beloved

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of mine hath closed thy eyes, and kept thy heart from me: yet every base pleasure, and pleasing lust hath kept my heart and eye from thee. Without my love to thee I cannot have my happinesse *applyed*, and *enjoyed*. It is *Faith* that marries thee to me: but this faith must *worke by love*, or my marriage will end in a fruitlesse barrennesse, and faithlesse separation. Hitherto therefore I have loved thee, but *for lust*, not *for love*. I would have thee save me, but I would not honour, and please thee. I can thus think of my disloyalty towards thee; but thou knewest it before I thought it, and more then I can speake or thinke. Thou doest *thinke thoughts of love and peace to me*, but I minde the abuse of thy love, and the too late repentance of thee *upon my owne termes*. How can I be acceptable to thee, (*My Love, my Dove, my undefiled,*) Thou spreadest out thy hands, and art ready for *blessing me*; but if I open my head, heart, hand, I am apt to receive nothing but *Anathema*, *Maranatha* from thee. Can love come to enmity, heaven to hell? I am hell (*my Lord*) thou art heaven? I am hatred, thou art Love. Thou *shewest hatred*, yet in my *wisdome am I very enmity*. Can I then expect either to have the *blessing* of Love, or to avoide the *curse* of not loving? *Oh shun not thy face, for it is vanity*. Thou hast often shewed me thy riches, and I have loved them: but oh shew me thy selfe, that I may love thee. I have seen thy goodnes, mercy, compassion, merit, salvation, and have cried out, (*My blessed Jesus*) make these mine. Now

et me see thy selfe, that thou *my beloved mayst be mine*, and all those riches in thee. From the ight of thy riches I have desired to preserve my elfe: from seeing thy selfe I shall desire to draw eere to thee, and to cleave to thee for ever. O hou whom my soule desires to love, *shew me then here thou liest at noone*, that I may see thee! I now where I shall finde thee at the night of my fe. I shall finde thee sitting on yonder throne, eady to say, either, *Come ye blessed*, or, *Goe yee rsed*. I doe not know whether so short a iew shall bring me to heare either the one, or he othre. Shew me then where thou liest *at his my noone*. Now thy Sun doth shine upon this ny tabernacle, and I have some time to behold hy beauty, that I may be in love with thy person: where then shall I finde thee? if I looke o *mount Tabor*, I see thee in glory, and I cannot ut love thee for that. If I looke *to the arden*, I see thee lying on the cold ground, weating *drops of blond* for mee, and I cannot ut love thee for that. If I looke to Golgotha, see thee nayled *to the Crosse*, and thy heart broached, that I may drinke thy blood and live, and I annot but love thee for that. If I looke to *mount livet*, I see thee ascending *farre above all heavens*, and I cannot but love thee for that also. ndeed in *Tabor* thou hadst visible glory, but it oone vanished: in the *Garden* and *Golgotha*, thou hadst *little* visible *beauty why I should desire thee*: nd in *Olivet*, thou wast quite carried out of my ight. If then thou liest for mee no where else, what hope have I to love thee, O thou to be be-

loved of all. Art thou not in the tents of the Sheperds? Dost thou not walke *in the midst of the golden Candlesticks?* Doest thou not *dwell in the hearts* of men by faith? O let mee see thee here below, in the Church, in my selfe. Let thy glory goe before me, that I may love thee for ever, and ever, and be blessed in thee. Thou hast a long time been manifested to me in thy natures, offices, and markes for me, and these draw mee to love thee. Thou hast beene crucified before my eyes, and the vertues of it have beene cleared by the Ministery of the Word, and Sacraments. I have heard and seene the *promises, signes,* and *seales* of thy deerest love, and these might allure me to love thee. But (*O thou chiefest of ten thousand*) why hast thou kept thy selfe at such a distance? why hast thou not been *formed in me?* why hast thou not *dwelt in me,* that I might see in thee the glories, and vertues, of thy life, death, resurrection, ascension, and to be *sicke of love?* Thou hast *stood and knockt* at the doore of my unworthy heart for this end. Thou wouldest have come *in and supped with me* after the noonshine of the Gospel, with thine owne banquet. But, alas, there was no roome for thee, because I desired first to feast it out with the base guests of sinfull lusts, before I would give thee entertainement. The cause hath been in my selfe, that I have not beene better acquainted with thee, and so, that I have not loved thee. O wretched soule that I am, *who shall deliver me* from being an enemy to my self! I have *bowed my knees to the Father*

ber of thee, the Lord Ieſus, that he would grant to me, according to the riches of his glory, that I may have his aſſiſtance to empty my ſelfe of all my wickedgueſts, that thou mayeſt come into me, and I may have the better liſt and leaſure to contemplate thy glory, and be grounded in thy love, O my bleſſed *Lord Jeſus*. Could I but get this, my gaines would be unſpeakeable. Whatſoever thou *commandeſt would be ſweet*, becauſe I love thee. If I could give thee my heart, thou wouldſt give it better to me againe: for no uncleane thing can come out of thy hands. But (O my deſired love) I have denied thee; therefore, I deny my ſelfe. I have rejected thee; therefore, I reject my ſelfe. Doe with me as thou wilt, onely firſt love me, and let me anſwer thee with love againe. And why ſhould not I be confident to be heard in this, ſeeing thou (*my love*) *ſitteſt at the right hand of God making requeſt for me*. Speak thou the word, and thy poore ſervant ſhall love thee. Say to my ſoule, *My Father hath heard thy prayer*, and then, *I will love thee dearely*. My *Lord Ieſus*, if I love thee, I live: If I love thee not, I periſh under a fearefull curſe for evermore. And ſhall it be thus with me, O thou that *wilt not the death of poore ſinners*, who pant after thee? No, no, thy merits and interceſſion have prevailed with my God. I finde the filth of domineering ſinne, in ſome meaſure, waſhed from the windowes of my ſoule, that the beames of thy glory may pierce it, and draw my love after thee. Now doe I begin *to be ſicke of love*, and earneſtly deſire thy

company here, *by grace*, and hereafter *by glory*. I love to heare thee speak (*let me heare thy voice for it is sweet*) and to speake to others of thee, and thy beauties. Thou hast made mee something willing to doe, and to suffer any thing for thee, *Lord perfect this good worke*. If I see the meaneſt persons like thee in thy goodneſſe, *My delight is in them*; I love them the better for thy sake. I dare not wilfully anger thee, and *my soule is vexed* with them that doe it. Thus the pulses of my soule (by thy blessing) doe begin to beat after thee. But (alas) when I consider how weake I am in thy love to thee my *Saviour*: when I find a thousand things creep in betwixt thee & home, and steale my heart away from thee: when I feele how easily I am diverted from thee and thy service, what comfort can my poore soule have now? *O my Lord Iesus*, thou wilt not leave thy own worke, & suffer *thy tender plant to wither away*! when thou hast sowed thy seed, hast thou not prepared the former and latter raine? *Shall I not be able to doe this through him that loveth thee and me?* I may not run from thy love, *thou art my Lord*. I dare not, *thou art my Iesus*. If thou live, let me know thy love to me. If I live, let me feele my love to thee. Oh *shed it more in my heart*, that as in beleeving in thee *my person* is justified, so in loving thee *my faith* may be justified, and in having *faith working by love*, I may so constantly walke in thy presence, that with comfort I may sing with the Bride, *Come Lord Iesus, come quickly*, Even so, Amen.

FINIS.